

2 Political

POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

Am

POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

An Introductory Analysis

AMAL KUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY

Presidency College, Calcutta.

CALCUTTA

K. P. Bagchi & Company

First Published 1977

① Sociology
② Politics



ALLAMA IQBAL LIBRARY



157586

320.9
M896

Copyright : Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay (1937)

K UNIVERSITY LIB.
Acc No 157506
Date 15.12.78

ST 01

car

S-1.82

TO

ILA, BANI AND SHANKAR

Gratefully Remembering the Services they Rendered

In the Mid-Summer of 1974.

W. H. H. H.

PREFACE

Ever since I started teaching Political Sociology to the post-graduate students of Calcutta University my friends and students were pressing me for writing a book on it. In view of the fact that there are, in the West, very few books giving a comprehensive and readable account of this newly emergent discipline and, indeed, none in India, I was, of course, convinced of the need for writing one although, for my multifarious preoccupations, I was initially much hesitant about taking upon myself this responsibility. Then, in August, 1975, while, one afternoon, inside a railway compartment I was talking about Political Sociology to Mr. Bholanath Banerjee—an ex-student of mine and, at present, a Lecturer in Political Science at Vidyasagar College, Calcutta—just to dust off the usual hazards of railway journey Mr. Banerjee very cleverly managed to extract a promise from me that I would, after all, be writing a book on Political Sociology. Once this was brought to the knowledge of our indefatigable friend, Mr. D. P. Paul of Presidency College Library, he immediately started his operations and, eventually, brought me in touch with Mr. Parimal Bagchi of K. P. Bagchi & Company who generously helped me in meeting one of my important commitments and thus made it all set for my writing this book.

While writing this book I have received considerable help and encouragement from some of my friends. The permanent source of inspiration, of course, has been Mr. Abhijit Mitra, a Lecturer in Political Science at the University of Burdwan. It was Mr. Mitra who, in fact, brought me to the field of Political Sociology from Political Philosophy which was, for long, my first love. The entire research assistance for this book has been provided by Mr. Bholanath Banerjee who also gave me some useful suggestions with regard to the chapter on Bureaucracy. Dr. Sobhanlal Datta Gupta, a Fellow at the Centre For Studies In Social Sciences, Calcutta, collected for me all the books I needed and furnished me with his highly valuable written comments on the framework of the last chapter. If the

book has any merit, I, no doubt, owe much of that to the help of these three young scholars although, for any failing, I alone own the entire responsibility.

The book has been written with limited ambitions. I have only wanted to give an idea of what Political Sociology is, what it is all about and, further, what implications it will have to one who chooses to look at it with a Marxist frame. Moreover, I have tried to say the things in as few words and in as simple a form as possible so that the so-called bulk and scholastic gymnastics may not unnecessarily mar one's delicate attachment at the first acquaintance. If, on reading this book, one tends to feel an urge to know more about the subject, I would consider my purpose as amply fulfilled.

A. K. M.

Department of Political Science,
Presidency College, Calcutta,
3rd January, 1977.

CONTENTS

1.	<i>Sociology of Politics or Political Sociology ?</i>	...	...	...	1
2.	<i>The Nonpolitical Politics</i>	...	...	...	13
3.	<i>Influence and Power</i>	...	...	...	25
4.	<i>Distribution of Political Power</i>	...	...	...	41
5.	<i>Authority</i>	...	...	...	59
6.	<i>Bureaucracy</i>	...	...	...	72
7.	<i>Political Culture</i>	...	...	...	86
8.	<i>Political Socialisation</i>	...	...	...	103
9.	<i>Political Participation</i>	...	...	...	120
10.	<i>Political Parties and Pressure Groups</i>	...	...	...	140
11.	<i>The Politics of Change</i>	...	...	...	172
12.	<i>Political Sociology : The Other View</i>	...	...	...	189
	<i>Books for Further Reading</i>	...	...	...	205
	<i>Index</i>	...	...	...	209

CHAPTER 1

SOCIOLOGY OF POLITICS OR POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY ?

In recent times there has been a quiet revolution in some important sectors of social sciences. Economics, for instance, is today unapproachable and also unpresentable without mathematics. Similarly, Political Science—one of the oldest disciplines of social sciences, having many hundreds of years' heritage—can no longer speak for itself unless it hires its mouthpiece from Sociology which is only a little more than hundred years old. Compared to Economics, however, the changes in Political Science are far more extensive. Mathematics has mainly wrought a methodological revision in Economics, its content still lying within its exclusive control whereas Sociology has not only altered the perspectival periphery of Political Science, but has as well reshaped the character and content of Political Science so much so that a new discipline called Political Sociology has lately emerged and is now looking potent enough to almost unseat Political Science, the traditional grandmaster of social sciences. Thirty years ago when Sociology was just beginning to extend its frontiers across the territory of Political Science many seemed convinced of the validity of the warning given by George Catlin in 1927 about ¹“the danger of merging Politics, as a subdivision, in Sociology”. But ²“today all appears to be changed : the student of affairs will hardly know when he reads his Lipset, his McKenzie or his Rose, whether he is in contact with sociology or political science. Often he will assume the former”. And that indicates that Political Sociology is now on the victory stand.

Yet one encounters much noise and confusion about the definition and scope of Political Sociology as an independent academic discipline. This is due to the fact that as an auto-

Political Sociology

nomous discipline Political Sociology is only in an infant stage. Despite the fact that different universities are now offering courses on Political Sociology there is hardly any agreement among its dealers about the topics to be discussed and the areas to be explored. Even, there is a controversy about the title of the discipline—some calling it Political Sociology, others preferring the name Sociology of Politics, still others strongly arguing about a clear distinction between these two titles and issuing a warning about the folly of confusing them. To explain all this one has only to look into the way Political Sociology has developed. Being a product of the technological age of twentieth century that believes more in stark action than in abstract conceptualisation, Political Sociology did not begin through theoretical formulations. Since the Second World War there started a tendency among the western scholars—especially the American scholars—to undertake empirical research of various political phenomena with a touch of Sociology in it. The more and more this type of research activity expanded the wider and wider was made room for Sociology in it. Whenever a substantial quantity of research was done in this direction there came about the question of classifying them and indicating the area of social sciences they touched on. It was realised that these novel research findings were neither pure Politics nor pure Sociology and, therefore, they were eventually placed under the new rubric called Political Sociology. Gradually as this research field was enriched by newer ramifications the pioneers naturally felt the necessity of providing a general conceptual framework that would support their respective empirical works. This is how the process of theoretical formulations for Political Sociology began—a process that is still going on, helping Political Sociology achieve its status as an independent discipline. And as the process is yet to be over the subject naturally suffers from an infantile indecisiveness.

Political Sociology, however, was not born by accident. A good many factors worked behind its emergence the most import-

Sociology of Politics or Political Sociology

ant among which was a growing dissatisfaction with the traditional nature of Political Science. It is true that the growth of Political Sociology was made possible by the increasing intrusion of Sociology within the sphere of Political Science ; but it is also true that many a leading political scientist—quite a majority at least in the U.S.A.—swallowed this intrusion without a murmur of protest. This was so just because for these political scientists there was no longer any charm in their academic exercises ; they were all dissatisfied and, indeed, fed up for two important reasons. Their dissatisfaction, firstly, was about the long tradition of Political Science being steeped in highly normative prescriptions. Barring the writings of a few political thinkers like Machiavelli, Hobbes and Hume, western Political Science till the end of 19th century had been mostly concerned with the question of 'ought' and had taken itself to a lofty abstract altitude wherefrom it sought to analyse political realities. In the early decades of 20th century voices of dissent against this heritage were sporadically heard. But after the Second World War, when fantastic scientific progress and technological advancement had greatly scientised the general intellectual atmosphere, political scientists in the West finally decided to abjure the a priori political speculations and began looking into political realities in the light of hard scientific empiricism. While doing so they were naturally attracted by Sociology which had already established itself as a positivistic and scientific discipline and leaned more and more towards it in order to provide a scientific brush-up to their discipline. Secondly, traditional Political Science had always viewed the state as its star attraction. The authority of the state had been given different explanations at different times, but always in terms of political relations. The operational changes in this authority had been sought to be interpreted against the background of a set enquiry as to how the state could effectively meet or fail to combat the incessant challenges of social change. But that this social change could have an important role in

Political Sociology

influencing a change in the position and pattern of authority had been treated as a question lying beyond the jurisdiction of Political Science. In other words, traditional Political Science had refused to accept a two-way relation between state and society. One of the obvious consequences of this attitude was to overemphasise the importance of laws and institutions as the only available means for comprehending political phenomena. Since the 'thirties political scientists began to be aware of the limitations of this legalistic and institutional approach. There was a growing realisation that politics is not an independent variable, that political questions could best be answered only when they were placed against the wider background of the societal whole. In the U.S.A. this attitude was reinforced in the 'thirties by the arrival ³“of a considerable number of European scholars, particularly German refugees, who brought with them a sociological approach to politics that strongly reflected the specific influence of Max Weber and the general influence of European sociology”. Moreover, since the 'fifties western social scientists started heading towards the unification of social sciences with the aid of an inter-disciplinary approach. This was also a factor contributing towards the development of Political Sociology.

Both ⁴Lipset and ⁵Runciman have fixed the timing of the birth of Political Sociology at about the middle of 19th century when under the impact of Industrial Revolution the traditional European social order gave in to modern society. Their thesis is that the emergence of modern society in Europe abundantly exhibited the difference between state and society whence Political Sociology originated. This statement, unless a little qualified, may seem rather confusing. Political Sociology, as a formal discipline, of course, began flourishing clearly a hundred years later than the time marked out by Lipset and Runciman. But, then, their statement ought not to be taken on its face value. What they, in fact, wish to convey is that

Sociology of Politics or Political Sociology

the possibility of Political Sociology was very much there at the middle of 19th century when for the first time the social was clearly distinguished from the political. This idea sounds quite fair, still one would like to add one more proviso in order to make it fully agreeable. To say that the distinction between state and society at once opened up the possibility of Political Sociology is a rash oversimplification. European modern society, after its birth, took quite a few more decades to consolidate its power and assume fantastically complex dimensions that would bewilder the controlling authority of the state and force it to be controlled by multiple points of social power. This is what gave a new character to political realities and Political Sociology emerged to explain this new situation.

But, whatever be the historical reasons for its emergence, Political Sociology as a new discipline is now with us and the question is : how do we define it? To put the matter very simply, Political Sociology is a child from the marriage between Sociology and Political Science and, as in human issues, cannot be solely characterised by its parental qualities alone. That Political Sociology is not Political Science should, of course, be the very first assumption in any attempt to define the former. Political Science is essentially a study of the state. The development and organisation of state power, the way it operates through a network of political institutions, the manner of its affecting the individual's life by means of manifold functions are the things Political Science enquires and explains. Political Science takes as political only what thrives within the purview of the state. It is strictly in this political sense that individuals and institutions are of interest to it. Thus a large area of human functions and relations lies outside the jurisdiction of Political Science. Sociology focuses its attention exactly on the area ignored by Political Science. Society being its central concern, Sociology searches the pattern and operation of interactive social relations, looks into the growth and working of social institutions and attempts at an evaluative description of

Political Sociology

social power and social progress. In other words, the distinction between Political Science and Sociology clearly corresponds to the distinction between state and society.

But will it be proper to make use of the same criterion while trying to distinguish Political Sociology from Political Science? Quite a number of political sociologists, including Lipset whose contribution to the development of the discipline is no small, prefer to adopt this yardstick. Thus Bendix and Lipset argue that "political science starts with the state and examines how it affects society, while political sociology starts with society and examines how it affects the state". The purport of this argument is that Political Science would have to be characterised by its emphasis on the political as the explanatory variable whereas Political Sociology is to be recognised by its emphasis on the social as the explanatory variable. In other words, here the line of distinction between Political Science and Political Sociology is drawn in terms of the distinction between state and society. But, bearing in mind that Sociology is differentiated from Political Science in just the same way, one may naturally keep wondering just how Political Sociology is to be distinguished from Sociology or whether there is actually no difference between these two disciplines and, further, if that is so, then whether it is not futile to try to present Political Sociology as an independent academic discipline. Writing two years after his joint essay with Bendix, Lipset perhaps became aware of this problem as he wrote : "the error lay in trying to deal with state and society as two independent organisms, and that one should not ask which is more important or preferable. Political sociologists came to argue that the state is just one of many political institutions, and that political institutions are one of many clusters of social institutions ; that the relationship among these institutions and clusters of institutions is the subject of sociology in general, and that the relationship between political institutions and other institutions is the special province of political sociology. In debating with political scientists

Sociology of Politics or Political Sociology

about the credentials of political sociology, sociologists have argued that the independent study of the state and other political institutions does not make theoretical sense". This certainly is an improvement over the earlier version of Lipset made together with Bendix. Here he is able to establish two distinct features of Political Sociology which are, first, that Political Sociology studies the relation between the social and the political and, second, that the political cannot be understood unless it is related to the social (the second point working as an explanatory hypothesis behind the first). The whole argument amounts to this definition of Political Sociology : Political Sociology is a discipline that tries to understand political phenomena by necessarily relating them to their social determinants.

But is it not, then, a Politics with a sociological bias, or to use a better phrase, a mere Sociology of Politics? There are some who are inclined to blur the distinction between Sociology of Politics and Political Sociology while there are others, ⁸Giovanni Sartori for instance, who refuse to accept these two as identical and claim that Political Sociology is Sociology of Politics plus something. The last view, on closer analysis, would appear to be the correct one although there may be an opinion different from what scholars like Sartori hold about the character of this 'something'.

Sociology of Politics is clearly a subfield of Sociology. It is a sociological appraisal of politics; that is, it treats political phenomena as dependent variables and accepts the underlying social phenomena as the explanatory variables. Its starting assumption is that man is not only a political animal, but as well a social animal, that besides his political actions he has had a non-political area of activity and the former is not unconnected with the latter, but is, in fact, incomprehensible unless the latter's influence on it is fully taken into account.

These social determinants may be known at three important levels—quantitative, structural and cultural. At the quantitative level the amount of social influence is sought to be measured.

Political Sociology

This quantitative assessment is important for understanding a political phenomenon as it determines its viability and stability, by taking due note of the degree of social response and social acceptance. It, further, helps comparing one political phenomenon with the other, thereby providing guidelines about the fixing of priorities in the field of political activities. But, for making this quantitative assessment, one needs to look closely at the social structure. The political man is essentially a product of his social experience. His political role is not simply determined by the established political—i.e., constitutional or institutional—frame. He has with him his family background, his occupation, his education, his religion, his sex, his friends and his class. It is against the background of these different strands of social structure that one may know fully about the political roles of a voter, a civil servant, a legislator or a party leader. But the social structure itself is subject to cultural constraints. It varies according to the change in social expectations and inhibitions. The status of a priest in an Indian village is now different from what it was in the past just because there has been a change in the nature of social expectations about his role-performance. Sociology of Politics, therefore, also approaches politics at the socio-cultural level.

In a word, in Sociology of Politics the focus of enquiry is on the society. Starting with the state, it goes beyond it, fixes its attention on the wider social panorama and stresses the fact that what is not apparently and immediately visible within the sphere of politics is more important than what interests a political scientist and thus makes Political Science largely dependent on Sociology.

Political Sociology, no doubt, incorporates much of Sociology of Politics within itself. Yet they are not synonymous. Sociology of Politics, as we have just seen, approaches politics as conditioned by the elements of social structure and social culture, thereby giving its entire emphasis on the social variables. The outcome of this is, no doubt, establishing a connection bet-

Sociology of Politics or Political Sociology

between Sociology and Political Science. But it is an odd connection in so far as it results in the dominance of one of the two connected things—of Sociology over Political Science. It is not, in any way, a connecting bridge equally looking after the interests of both the ends.

Political Sociology is, indeed, this connecting bridge that one finds so much missing in Sociology of Politics. Political Sociology believes in a two-way relation between Sociology and Political Science, giving equal emphasis on both the social and political variables. It does not, for instance, explain the working of party system only in terms of its response to and reflection of the socio-economic scene, but also investigates how the society is as much conditioned by the party system. Or, to give an Indian illustration, while Sociology of Politics analyses Indian politics in terms of its caste-ridden society, Political Sociology adds to that an enquiry into how politics in India has affected the Indian caste system, giving rise to what is called "politicisation of caste". In his essay 'From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology', Sartori discusses at length to point out this difference between Sociology of Politics and Political Sociology. As he says : ¹⁰"Political Sociology is only born when the sociological and 'politological' approaches are combined at their point of intersection. If the 'sociology of politics deals with the nonpolitical reasons why people act the way they do in political life', political sociology should include also the political reasons why people act the way they do. A real political sociology is, then, a cross-disciplinary breakthrough seeking enlarged models which reintroduce as variables the 'givens' of each component source." By thus presenting Political Sociology as ¹¹"an interdisciplinary hybrid", as a fusion of Sociology and Politics, Sartori has done a job much to the benefit of the discipline. By differentiating it from Sociology of Politics he has broken a misconception allowed to grow for long in the ideas of some of the leading political sociologists and also has made an important groundwork for the develop-

Political Sociology

ment of its theoretical framework about which ¹²Bendix and Lipset at one time seemed rather unsure. Again, by insisting that Political Sociology is equally concerned with the political variables, he has tried to save Political Science from its total seizure by Sociology.

—There is nothing to disagree with Sartori so long as he separates Political Sociology from Sociology of Politics. Yet his definition is far from complete. Political sociology, no doubt, combines political inputs with the sociological inputs and thus keeps itself apart from both Sociology and Political Science. But what is missing in Sartori's definition—much as he is concerned about maintaining the elements of Politics in Political Sociology—is the fact that while giving due emphasis on the political variables it attaches to them a character totally different from what they are supposed to have and this is what establishes the uniqueness of the discipline. To make the point straight, let us list out the essential features of Political Sociology :

✓ 1. Political Sociology is not Political Science since, unlike the latter, it is not a state discipline or a study of the statecraft.

✓ 2. Nor is it Sociology of Politics because, unlike the latter, it is not only concerned with the social but with the political as well.

3. Although it is interested in the political it views the political from an angle different from the frame traditionally held by political scientists in as far as it rests on the assumption that although the political differs from the social in content it invariably assumes the form of the social. That is to say, Political Sociology revolves round the belief that there exists an identity of form between the social process and the political process. The way the social process operates is, on closer analysis, identical with the manner of working of the political process. It is in this way that Political Sociology tries to resolve the traditional controversy between state and society. Just at

Sociology of Politics or Political Sociology

this point one may pause to question whether Political Sociology, thus conceived, does not turn into Sociology of Politics. That it is not so will be evident once we care to remember that Sociology of Politics does not recognise the independence of political variables whereas Political Sociology, understood in the aforesaid way, gives due recognition to political explanatory variables although it has its own way of characterising what is political.

Political Sociology may, therefore, be defined as *the product of a cross-fertilisation between Sociology and Political Science that studies the impact of society on politics and also the reverse, although viewing the substance of politics in a social form*. Such a definition shows how Political Sociology embodies the elements of both Sociology and Political Science and yet represents an advance over both of them. It also brings to the fore the principal motivation underlying the growth of this discipline. Stability of the democratic political system has been the central concern of all our modern political sociologists. Lipset frankly admits that ¹³“if the stability of society is a central issue for sociology as a whole, the stability of a specific institutional structure or political regime—the social conditions of democracy—is the prime concern of political sociology”. The best way to assure this stability is to demonstrate an indisputable validity of the democratic political system. Political Sociology attempts this task by putting the whole issue first on the larger canvas of society. It discovers that modern society is naturally permeated by conflicts which, however, do not threaten the stability of the social order simply because the social process operates to forge consensus out of these conflicts; as there is no end to the emergence of conflicts, similarly there is no end to this process of arriving at consensus. The naturalness of this process is the mark of the validity of this social order. Political Sociology, in its urge to ensure the stability of the democratic political system, stretches this analysis to the political sphere and claims that the democratic politi-

Political Sociology

cal process is as much valid since it also works in terms of the natural social process in as far as it is as well wedded to the goal of bringing in consensus out of conflicts. It is for this reason that Political Sociology finds an identity between the social process and the political process and thereby introduces a new definition of politics which will be looked into in the subsequent chapter.

REFERENCES :

1. G. E. G. Catlin, *The Science and Method of Politics*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., London, 1927, p. 170.
2. D. G. Macrae, "Foundations for the Sociology of Politics" in *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 3, p. 324.
3. R. A. Dahl, "The Behavioural Approach in Political Science" in *Contemporary Political Thought*, Gould & Thursby (eds.), Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., New York, 1969, p. 121.
4. S. M. Lipset, "Political Sociology" in *Sociology Today*, Merton, Broom & Cottrell, Jr. (eds), Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1965, p. 81.
5. See W. G. Runciman, *Social Science & Political Theory*, Cambridge, 1971, Chapter 2.
6. R. Bendix & S. M. Lipset, "The Field of Political Sociology" in *Political Sociology*, L. A. Coser (ed.), Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1967, p. 26.
7. S. M. Lipset, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
8. Giovanni Sartori, "From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology" in *Politics and the Social Sciences*, S. M. Lipset (ed.), Wiley Eastern Private Ltd., New Delhi, 1972, Chapter 4.
9. See Rajni Kothari, *Politics in India*, Orient Longman Ltd., 1970.
10. Giovanni Sartori, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
11. *Ibid*, p. 69.
12. "Political Sociology so far lacks a theoretical framework"—See Bendix and Lipset, "The Field of Political Sociology" in *Political Sociology*, L. A. Coser (ed.), Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1967, p. 15.
13. S. M. Lipset, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92.

CHAPTER 2

THE NONPOLITICAL POLITICS

In determining the scope of Political Sociology it is important to know what is political to a political sociologist. For, if Political Sociology, as we have seen earlier, is no less concerned with the political variables, one naturally would like to know what kinds of political variables interest it and, further, in what particular perspective it tends to approach them. In other words, any discussion on the content of Political Sociology cannot fruitfully begin unless it is preceded by an analysis of the idea of politics as embraced by Political Sociology. But Political Sociology is not only political, it is Sociology as well. Therefore, at the very start of this kind of analysis, one would do well to remember that that idea of politics alone would fit in with the nature and scope of Political Sociology which does not in any way hinder, but rather facilitates the cross-fertilisation between Sociology and Political Science.

The idea of politics has never been static, nor has there been an agreement on this question. However, it is possible to trace two important phases in the development of the definitional discourses on politics. The first one—that might be termed as traditional—has kept politics confined to a study of the state, government or formal political institutions. Politics, according to the pursuers of this line of thinking, invariably revolves round the reality of the state the authority of which—so goes the argument that is, indeed, borrowed from Aristotle—is without any parallel in the rest of society. It is a politics within the state, that precisely corresponds to “that part of the affairs of the state which centres in government and that kind or part of government which speaks through law”. Not only political scientists at one time were fond of this approach to politics in the light of the state. Even sociologists found it

Political Sociology

agreeable. For instance, Max Weber, the great sociological giant, writing in the early 'twenties could not override the traditional boundaries of politics. Politics to him meant "striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state".

Twentieth century began with a preponderant bias towards this tradition that went on unchallenged until 1908 when two books were published—one in the U.S.A., Arthur F. Bentley's *The Process of Government* and the other in Britain, Graham Wallas's *Human Nature in Politics*—to provide new directions. Bentley considered the erstwhile notion of politics as 'dead' and argued that the 'raw materials' of politics do not flow from the state, but are supplied by the activities and relationships of the social groups whose incessant interactions must be the matter of chief concern to a political analyst. But Bentley's plea for redefining politics in terms of group activities virtually fell on deaf ears among his contemporaries. For its proper appreciation Bentley's idea had to wait till 1951 when David B Truman in his *The Governmental Process* tried to revitalise the group approach to politics. Drawing mainly from the contemporary wealth of empirical psychology, Graham Wallas in his *Human Nature in Politics* tried to identify politics in the complex cobweb of human behaviour and thereby sought to put an end to the structural formalism of politics. But Wallas's idea, like that of Bentley, met a cool reception from his contemporaries. Besides Walter Lippmann in his *Public Opinion* published in 1922 no other political writer at that time seemed inclined to follow the Wallasian trend of interpreting politics in terms of psychological variables. The traditional idea of politics was still a hard nut to crack.

The second phase began with Charles E. Merriam's *New Aspects of Politics* published in 1925. With this book Merriam thundered a protest against the established tradition. Here he emphasised the necessity of looking into the psychological and sociological variables of politics and made a strong plea for

The Nonpolitical Politics

making political behaviour as the central object of enquiry. To popularise this new approach Merriam not simply wrote, but also made the fullest use of his influences in the university he taught to bring in a new climate of opinion. ³“During the next decade under Merriam’s leadership at the University of Chicago, the Department of Political Science was the centre of what would later have been called the behavioural approach. A number of the political scientists who subsequently were widely regarded as leaders in introducing that approach into American political science were faculty members or graduate students there : for example, Harold Lasswell as a faculty member and V.O. Key, Jr., David Truman, Herbert Simon, and Gabriel Almond, all graduate students in Merriam’s department before the Second World War. Chicago was not the only place where the new mood of scientific empiricism was strong...But the collective impact of ‘the Chicago school’ as it was sometimes called, was greater than that of a single scholar.” Behaviouralism that thus initially started as a protest movement launched by a minority of American scholars came to be a major influence in political studies after the Second World War. It was under this influence that the idea of politics was thoroughly revolutionised and this wind of change is clearly discernible in many a writing produced since the ’fifties. To understand the nature and magnitude of this change it is necessary to take note of the central feature of behaviouralism.

“The behavioural persuasion in politics is concerned with what man does politically and the meanings he attaches to his behaviour.” That is to say, behaviouralism seeks to explain the political phenomena in terms of the observed and observable behaviour of men. It thus rejects the grand old tradition of the institutional understanding of politics. The political analyst, according to this view, should study activity and not institutions. For, the institution as a thing in itself does not provide the real content of politics. The stuff of politics is composed of the activity within and the behaviour around the

Political Sociology

political institutions. To a behaviouralist, for instance, the institutional structure of Indian Parliament or the formal duties of its members are not much important for an understanding of its working. What is important is the behaviour of its members in the perspective of which one has to make his appraisal of the operation of Indian Parliament. Politics thus becomes an activity—an activity to be known through manifest behaviour. And, since it is a concrete activity couched in observable behaviour it is a quantifiable activity—an activity that is subject to empirical investigation. Behaviouralism, in this way, takes politics out of the level of abstract formulations and gives it a scientific character.

Once politics is thus delinked from formal political institutions and taken to consist in activity to be approached through observed and observable behaviour, it at once assumes completely new dimensions. It no longer waits for its content to be conditioned by the format of the state. Its association with behaviour now puts it on the social plane. In other words, politics, in place of being state-oriented, now becomes society-oriented; it becomes nonpolitical. It is liberated out of the fixed pale of the state and can be met at any level in society. Taking our old example, if the operation of Indian Parliament has to be assessed in the light of the behaviour of its members, then certainly the politics of Indian Parliament would no longer mean what we traditionally hold this politics to be. The behaviour of members being mostly a matter of social learning and social experience, the politics of Indian Parliament, naturally, cannot be said to be lying within the narrow political frame, but has to be located somewhere in the social process.

This nonpolitical politics, or politics without the state—which happens to be an important outcome of the behavioural movement—was, for the first time, most clearly stated by Harold Lasswell when in his *Politics : Who Gets What, When, How* published in 1936 he wrote : “The study of politics is the study of influence and the influential.” When we further see

The Nonpolitical Politics

Lasswell defining the influential as 'those who get the most of what there is to get', that is, when he interprets the relation of influence in terms of the distribution of social rewards, there remains no doubt that Lasswell is bent on taking politics out of the legal and political framework and placing it on the social canvas. The trend set by Lasswell was widely continued in many political writings produced since the 'fifties. Quite a number of writers now began emphasising the possibility of politics without the state. One, of course, notices considerable difference in their respective treatments. But they all seem to agree that "if we are to regard politics as a permanent feature of human society, we must not pin it to the study of states".

In the 'fifties the development of the idea of nonpolitical politics began with David Truman's *The Governmental Process* published in 1951. Truman argued that the central issues in politics are the activities of interest groups and the process that adjusts the conflicts among the interests of these groups. Truman thus shifted the focus from the state to the social groups the divergence of interests among which would, according to him, account for the emergence of politics. Thus at Truman's hand the area of the operation of politics was widened, but only up to the level of interest groups.

A further advancement in this direction was made by David Easton in his *The Political System* published in 1953. In this book Easton outright rejected all formal analysis of politics on the basis of states and their institutions. He identified the political system with "the authoritative allocation of values for a society" and in a later work asserted that politics should be concerned with "that system of interactions in any society through which...binding or authoritative allocations are made and implemented". Thus, according to Easton, politics is a kind of activity that involves authoritative allocation of values for a society. In every society values are desired, that is, people comprising any society have different interests and objectives which have to be allocated, that is, distributed

Political Sociology

by someone or something in authority. The allocation is authoritative in the sense that ⁹“the people to whom it is intended to apply or who are affected by it consider that they must or ought to obey it”. Politics is here clearly characterised by the authoritative decision-making process of any society, that is, any social organisation—be it a club, a business firm, a labour union or a medical association. In other words, politics being treated as an inevitable aspect of the social life in general is supposed to occur at any level.

On closer analysis, this nonpolitical politics of Easton would appear to have two important characteristics. In the first place, it is a politics operating, no doubt, in the power perspective since authoritative allocation necessarily involves the actual exercise or, at least, the threat of the exercise of power. Secondly, while emphasising politics as an activity Easton, by no means, seems ready to rest it on conflict or struggle. Authoritative allocation of values, as he understands it, may in some cases be necessitated by a conflict situation, but conflict, certainly, is not the prerequisite for it. Authoritative allocation may as well be possible in a situation where there is no conflict for values. As Vernon Van Dyke has correctly said : ¹⁰“This ...reduces the difficulties that attend a focus on politics defined as struggle over issues, for the authoritative allocation of values could be tacit, unattended by current struggle. Easton’s definition encompasses the politics of consent as well as the politics of struggle.”

Politics in a much wider nonpolitical façade was viewed by E. C. Banfield when in his *Politics, Planning and the Public Interest* written jointly with M. Myerson and published in 1955 he defined politics as ¹¹“the activity (negotiation, argument, discussion, application of force, persuasion, etc.) by which an issue is agitated or settled”. In several important respects, this definition stands sharply different from Easton’s. In the first place, Easton’s politics is always ‘for a society’, that is, it is taken to operate only in the context of some social organisation.

The Nonpolitical Politics

Banfield's definition avoids the organisational framework. His politics is a social activity that is not necessarily dependent on the working of any kind of organisation. Thus, whenever an issue is agitated or settled among two individuals privately there is very much of politics there. Secondly, by spelling out the political activity as 'negotiation, argument, discussion, application of force, persuasion, etc.', Banfield makes it clear that his politics, unlike Easton's, does not have to be invariably related to the power perspective. Negotiation, argument, discussion and persuasion, being essentially non-coercive activities, of course, do not imply the operation of power. Thirdly, instead of making power the determinant of politics, Banfield looks upon conflict as the central criterion of politics since the agitation or settlement of an issue invariably presupposes the presence of some kind of conflict, disagreement or struggle.

Bertrand de Jouvenel, writing in the early 'sixties, also took politics as a social activity as he preferred to treat as political¹² "every systematic effort performed at any place in the social field to move other men in pursuit of some design cherished by the mover". Here Jouvenel is in complete agreement with Banfield in so far as he locates politics 'at any place in the social field'. But one may also notice a difference which is that while Banfield treats conflict as the keystone of political activity Jouvenel tends to place politics in the perspective of power relations. Moving of an actor by the other in accordance with the designs of the latter may in most cases imply a power relation since the actor moved normally may not like to act according to the wishes of the actor moving. This interpretation of politics in terms of power was more clearly presented by Robert Dahl when in his *Modern Political Analysis* published in 1963 he defined a political system as a¹³ "persistent pattern of human relationships that involves, to a significant extent, power, rule, or authority". Still, Dahl's politics is non-political. He fully recognises politics being possible at any social level and not at the state level alone. Indeed, the 'per-

Political Sociology

sistent pattern of human relationships' he speaks of may well be found to function within a family or any other social group. In a different language William Bluhm in his *The Theories of the Political System* published in 1965 put almost the same version when he stated : ¹⁴"Reduced to its universal elements, then, politics is a social process characterised by activity involving rivalry and cooperation in the exercise of power, and culminating in the making of decisions for a group." One unique feature of this definition is that it unequivocally describes politics as a social process—an epithet that others have chosen to avoid. What, however, should not miss one's attention is that, in terms of this definition, politics is a social activity which is marked not by any kind of rivalry and cooperation, but only by that kind of rivalry and cooperation that are employed in course of exercising power and that finally culminate in a decision-making. That is to say, it is a nonpolitical politics operating only within the limits of power relations.

Scanning the definitions listed above it appears that, with the exception of Banfield, all others have accepted a nonpolitical politics but, at the same time, directly or indirectly, have sought to identify politics in the context of the relationship of power or authority. In this tendency to make power an essential determinant of politics one may possibly trace the paramount influence of Max Weber who defined ¹⁵"the 'political'...only in terms of...the use of force", that is, to whom coerciveness was the most important criterion of politics. Incorporation of power or authority within the idea of politics, of course, does not affect its nonpolitical character. For power and authority as characteristic social control processes are not the sole monopoly of the institutions of the state. It is quite possible to detect their operation at myriad points of the societal whole. A father can exercise power over members of a family just as the Secretary of a government department can exercise power over the employees serving the department. But power and authority have necessarily a structural context. They are in-

The Nonpolitical Politics

conceivable unless they are associated with some form of organisation. Thus to relate politics to power is to limit it by the institutional frame. Hence nonpolitical politics presented in power relations has a disadvantage in as far as it cannot totally free itself from some kind of institutional approach. It, no doubt, remains nonpolitical, but only in the narrowest sense of being only public and not in the broadest sense of being both public and private. Again, the very fact that the state wields the strongest power and enjoys the highest authority may make it difficult for someone building up a nonpolitical politics in terms of power relations to avoid giving greater weightage to the political variables emerging within the area of the state. In other words, the point is that a nonpolitical politics garbed in power relations may, in the ultimate analysis, be found to be less nonpolitical.

Banfield's nonpolitical politics, it must be admitted, stands positively different from that of others. His nonpolitical politics may well be both private and public since it consists in the agitation and settlement of any issue—a process understandable without any organisational context. Pursuing Banfield's line, J.D.B. Miller in his *The Nature of Politics* published in 1962 elaborately defined politics in a way that must be recognised as the best attempt of presenting a nonpolitical politics in the clearest terms. According to Miller, diversity is a permanent condition of man's social life. Social diversities lead to conflict which needs settlement. Politics consists in this conflict and its settlement. ¹⁶"Politics is what it is because society is what it is : because men, in their social situation, find themselves divided....Politics is a natural reflex of the divergences between the members of a society." It is a permanent feature of human society because social diversities are never going to stop. It is ¹⁷"a matter of the expression, advocacy, settlement and modification of disagreements." Miller, however, is aware that for the reconciliation or settlement of these disagreements some kind of authority or government is necessary. But, then, he is

Political Sociology

quick to add that this government may either be ¹⁸“public or private”. Again, he spares no pains to point out that his emphasis is on conflict and not on power or government, that is, according to him, politics is generated by the social divergence and not by the process of power or government. Moreover, while speaking of government, he takes as relevant not the institutional arrangement of government, but only the essence of government. To make this point straight he goes as far as saying that politics, as he understands it, may not be found to occur even at the formal institutional level of government just because of the absence of a conflict situation. Thus ¹⁹“it was not a political act when the House of Commons sent good wishes unanimously to Sir Winston Churchill on his birthday ; it would have been if there had been opposition, but in the particular circumstances it was an act taken within the ambit of political institutions, and in connection with past political happenings, but not, in the strict sense, a political act in itself, even though the organs of government were closely associated with it”. On the other hand, two babies quarrelling over the possession of a toy and their mother ultimately intervening and settling the matter would reveal, according to Miller’s definition, a perfectly political situation. Thus politics is perfectly non-political in as far as it operates in a club, a professional body, a trade union, a trade association, a church and even between individuals untied to any institutional set-up.

Once this view of politics is accepted, some of the fixed notions in the field of political studies immediately start crumbling. For instance, the apolitical character of civil service and judiciary, which is so greatly stressed in liberal democracies, no longer makes any sense. Since the members of civil service and judiciary are very much involved in the process of bringing settlement in conflict situations they must be taken to be as much a part of the political process as the members belonging to other active branches of government. Again, on this view, all the different political systems of the

The Nonpolitical Politics

world look like having a fundamental unity, conflict having been taken as the universal characteristic of all these political systems. Above all, the term political process assumes a completely different connotation. Politics being taken as nonpolitical, that is, the society at large being taken as the breeding ground of politics, the traditional barrier between the social process and the political process breaks down. Once this is done, it becomes only appropriate to treat the political phenomena in terms of the social variables and also to allow a free interflow between the former and the latter. In other words, it is this nonpolitical politics that enables a marriage between Political Science and Sociology and, thereby, makes Political Sociology workable.

Political Sociology thus embraces only this kind of non-political politics that disowns its association with the state and its formal institutions and, instead, looks upon society as the place of its birth. Politics being thus taken as social, Political Sociology does not make the state the starting point of its enquiry. It bids a farewell to the state and undertakes the task of investigating the social process characterised by conflict and consensus, that accounts for what it considers as political. It is against the background of this process that Political Sociology seeks to provide an explanation of what are traditionally known as political phenomena, that is, the phenomena centring round the state and its formal institutions. Obviously, then, politics in Political Sociology implies a symmetrical relation between the social and political variables. About the social process of conflict and consensus which, as we have seen, is the central hypothesis to a political sociologist Political Sociology, however, does not offer any value judgment. That is, it takes the social situation permeated by conflict as it is; it does not try to envisage the possible ways of putting an end to this conflict since the end of conflict will mar the very assumption on which rests the whole of Political Sociology. It only enquires into the roots of this conflict and on the basis of that investigation

makes its further assumptions about the social process—the assumptions around which have grown its contents. What these contents are and the ways they have developed will be seen in the subsequent chapters.

REFERENCES

1. Charles Hyneman, *The Study of Politics*, Urbana : University of Illinois Press, 1956, p. 26.
2. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" excerpted in A. Pizzorno (ed.), *Political Sociology*, Penguin Books Ltd., England, 1971, p. 28.
3. R. A. Dahl, "The Behavioural Approach in Political Science" in *Contemporary Political Thought*, Gould & Thursby (eds.), Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., New York, 1969, pp. 120-21.
4. Heinz Eulau, *The Behavioural Persuasion in Politics*, New York, Random House, 1963, p. 5.
5. *The Political Writings of Harold D. Lasswell*, The Free Press : Glencoe : Illinois, 1951, p. 295.
6. W. J. M. Mackenzie, *Politics and Social Science*, Penguin Books, 1967, p. 156.
7. David Easton, *The Political System*, New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 1960, p. 129.
8. David Easton, *A Framework for Political Analysis*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J. : Prentice-Hall, 1965, p. 50.
9. David Easton, *The Political System*, p. 132.
10. Vernon Van Dyke, "The Optimum Scope of Political Science" in *Political Science : Introductory Essays and Readings*, Bellows, Erikson and Winter (eds.), Duxbury Press : Belmont, California, 1971, p. 18.
11. M. Myerson and E. C. Banfield, *Politics, Planning and the Public Interest*, New York : Free Press, 1955, pp. 304-305.
12. Bertrand de Jouvenel, "On the Nature of Political Science" in *The American Political Science Review*, December, 1961, p. 773.
13. Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, Prentice-Hall of India (Private) Ltd., New Delhi, 1965, p. 6.
14. William Bluhm, *The Theories of the Political System*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J. : Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965, p. 5.
15. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, The Free Press, New York, Paperback Edition, 1966, p. 155.
16. J. D. B. Miller, *The Nature of Politics*, Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., London, 1965, p. 17.
17. Ibid, p. 284.
18. Ibid, p. 285.
19. Ibid, p. 20.

CHAPTER 3

INFLUENCE AND POWER

Since the content of the political in Political Sociology is taken to be provided by the conflicts in society Political Sociology naturally looks on society as essentially characterised by a continuous crop-up of conflicts and their settlement. But why do conflicts continuously emerge in society? They do because diversities and disagreements are a permanent condition of man's social life. These diversities and disagreements, again, are the natural consequences of another basic fact that in every society resources are invariably scarce. No society, no matter how much developed and self-sufficient it is, can claim to have all types of resources in abundance. This scarcity of resources inevitably presupposes their uneven distribution. Had the resources been available in plenty, those wishing to possess and enjoy them would all have had enough of them; the tendency to grab a larger share of them would not have arisen at all or even when some would have taken a much larger share, that would not be a cause of conflict since others having obtained a sufficient quantity of them would not perhaps cry over that. Thus conflict arises in society because there are disagreements caused by the uneven distribution of resources which has to be accounted for by the scarcity of these resources.

Although uneven distribution of resources results from their scarcity the intensity of this uneven distribution, however, is augmented for various reasons. Modern society thrives on division of labour which naturally leads to specialisation of functions that, in effect, regulates in different ways the availability of resources to different persons. One engaged in a highly specialised function is likely to have a greater control over resources than one doing a much less specialised job. Between the two brothers in a family there must be a wide differ-

Political Sociology

ence with regard to the range of their respective access to resources when one is a Departmental Secretary and the other is a petty Section Officer. Again, differences in biological and social endowments at birth tend to create different opportunities for having control over resources. The biological differences between a man and a woman will clearly have an impact on their respective capability to control resources. Again, the higher social endowments a man receives at birth just because he has been born in a family placed on a high scale of wealth and social prestige would naturally ensure an access to greater resources. Again, these facts of biological and social endowments, on their part, account for a wide variation in the incentives and goals of different people in a society. A woman is less likely to have the same incentive of a man for going in for a hard factory job. Similarly, the son of a business magnate is more likely than the son of a poor peasant's family to be attracted by the goal of starting a business firm on his own. These differences in incentives and goals will naturally bring in differences in skill and that, in its turn, will have a further impact over the opportunities for controlling resources. Sometimes just a chance factor may serve as a cause. An accidental windfall gain like winning a lottery ticket or suddenly becoming a successor to a property left away by the whimsical will of a tycoon opens up the possibility of having a greater share of resources.

For these and many other reasons resources are never equally distributed in a society. But, then, what exactly would we mean by a resource? What connotation would it have to a political sociologist? In Political Sociology resource is understood as a means by which a person can influence the behaviour of other persons. Thus to understand the net impact of the uneven distribution of resources in a society one has to take note of the nature and operation of influence.

¹"The exercise of influence consists in affecting policies of others than the self. To have influence is to occupy a high

Influence and Power

position (and potential) with respect to all the values important in the society. Influence is exercised when its possession affects the interpersonal relations of those (other than the self) active in the shaping and enjoyment of the values." In other words, influence is a person's capacity to affect others' behaviour in a way willed by the former. Influence, thus understood, would reveal two of its important characteristics. In the first place, it involves an inter-relation, be that inter-relation between individuals, groups, associations, organisations or states. An actor is said to have influence not over his own self but over others; A's influence makes sense only when A is considered in relation to B, C and D. Secondly, the intentions of the actor influencing are highly important for establishing a relation of influence. Unless there is a clear intention on the part of A to move B in his own way A cannot be said to have influence over B. Suppose a son's policy follows that of his father; but if the father has never intended to affect his son's policy, a mere similarity in the policies of both is not enough to prove that the father influences the son. It is, however, necessary to distinguish an actor's actual influence from his potential influence. The potential influence may be known by taking into account the amount of resources at the disposal of an actor and also the nature and extent of his skill to use these resources. Actual influence, of course, in most cases is likely to fall far short of the maximum potential influence. This so happens because an actor often fails to make the fullest utilisation of the resources he possesses just because he does not have the necessary skill. Or, again, even when there is no difficulty with regard to the required amount of skill, an actor simply does not fully use the resources as he does not consider it worthwhile.

Since the resources are unevenly distributed, influences in a society naturally vary from person to person. Some persons are more influential than others and many, in fact, are without any influence at all. Indeed, without such a situation influence would not make any sense at all. Had all in a society been

equally influential, who, then, would remain to be influenced? This uneven distribution of influence being essentially a resultant feature of the uneven distribution of resources, however, is further intensified by other factors. One among these factors is the variation in skill. Without the possession of resources the question of the skill to use these resources is, of course, quite irrelevant. But mere possession does not automatically ensure the necessary skill which depends on one's upbringing, training, opportunities and incentives which, again, are conditioned by the type of family and social atmosphere he lives in. Again, influences differ because of differences in the motivations to use the resources. Two actors possessing equal amount of resources may not like to use these resources to the same extent because they may have different attitude with regard to the possible gains to be had from the use of these resources. This subjective attitudinal factor is, of course, conditioned by one's endowments and experiences.

To measure influence one has to take note of its weight, its domain and its scope. ²"The weight of influence is the degree to which policies are affected; the domain of influence, the persons whose policies are affected; the scope of influence, the values implicated in the policies." In other words, in order to determine the influence of an actor one has, first, to take note of the amount of change in the position of the actor influenced. But a mere objective assessment of the amount of change is not always a true indicator of the weight of influence. To get the educated people living in the urban areas of India strictly follow the family planning measures is much easier than influencing the illiterate rural folk of India to practise family planning. In the latter case the psychological cost of compliance is much higher than in the former case. Thus it may so happen that in a specific situation the amount of change in the position of the actor influenced, while objectively assessed, may appear quite substantial, but a very low cost of compliance involved in such a case may considerably reduce the actual

Influence and Power

weight of influence. Hence in determining the extent of real change in the position of the actor influenced the subjective cost of compliance must be taken into consideration.

Again, in estimating the weight of influence the probability of compliance in a situation prior to the exercise of influence is also a consideration one can hardly neglect. A mad pedestrian suddenly standing at the junction of thoroughfares and asking the traffic to follow the rules which, in fact, the traffic constable on duty is commanding at the same time is certainly no evidence of the influence of this pedestrian since in his absence too the traffic would follow the rules. Hence while determining the weight of influence one has to do a little bit of comparison between the amount of compliance secured in a situation under influence and that in a hypothetical situation where this relation of influence is absent; the greater the difference between the two, the greater would be the weight of influence.

The domain of influence refers to the number of persons influenced. To assess influence, certainly, it is useful to know how many actually respond to the influence. But too much emphasis on the domain of influence alone may sometimes give us a deceptive picture. A may have influence over ten thousand persons while B may exert influence over a thousand persons only; but B's influence may cover a range of issues much wider than that under the influence of A, making thus B more influential than A. Hence, side by side with analysing the domain, one has to make a careful scrutiny of the scope of influence, that is, the issues involved. If the area covering the issues is wide, the influence naturally will be high. Thus a village school master's scope of influence covering mainly the school matters is much narrower than that of a leader of the village *panchayat* whose influence extends to various social and political matters of the village and hence the latter is more influential than the former.

There are instances of influence where the probability of compliance on the part of the influenced is very high, requiring

Political Sociology

little effort on the part of the actor influencing to establish his influence. This kind of influence, like that of an affectionate father over his children in the family, may be called spontaneous influence. Again, there may be situations where the probability of compliance being extremely low it requires a considerable effort on the part of the actor influencing to establish his influence. This effort invariably involves an actual use or a threat of the use of sanctions. Such kind of influence is called coercive influence and power is the other name of this coercive influence.

Power, thus, is a special kind of influence. It is the use or a threat of the use of sanctions that differentiates power from influence in general. The sanctions involved in power need not always have to be an actual or threatened deprivation, inflicting penalties and losses on others; they may also be applied in the form of giving or promising to give rewards like wealth or honour. The former is an instance of negative sanctions while the latter is a case of the use of positive sanctions. Power, thus, is the capacity to affect other's behaviour by the use or the threat of the use of positive or negative sanctions. Positive sanction in the form of a promise of reward, however, may in some cases get transformed into a negative sanction. For instance, whenever an actor promises a substantial reward to another actor for moving according to the designs of the former, the latter's expectations about this reward take him to a level much higher than where he is now and, hence, in case he fails to act according to the intentions of the former he is, no doubt, thrown from this higher level which, indeed, means a severe psychological loss for him and thus the sanction that initially was applied as a positive one ultimately ends in a negative sanction.

Since power is the capacity to affect other's behaviour it is basically relational and not a simple personal property. One can have power only over others. Thus, the very sound of the word power prompts one to ask : power over whom? Some-

Influence and Power

times we tend to understand power as such without trying to place it in the context of its use against others. Thus we take a nation as powerful just because it has enormous military strength or a family as powerful since it has great wealth. Here we seem to take power as indetical with military strength or wealth, but the fact is that we tend to do so just because we have our experiences that military strength or wealth enables a nation or a family to exercise power over others. Thus in such cases the relational aspect is implicit in our very understanding.

Further, to say that power is relational is also to imply that it is behavioural. For, if power consists in an inter-relation between two actors, then certainly that inter-relation can only be understood in terms of one actor's manifest behaviour as affecting the manifest behaviour of others. If this is so, then certainly it is senseless to speak of an actor's power, if his behaviour has not manifestly affected the behaviour of other actors. It is because power is thus behavioural that it is liable to measurement and comparative assessment. If power were a simple personal property, that is, if, following our earlier illustration, military strength and wealth taken as such were treated as the true index of power, then one would have faced tricky situations like this : Suppose, one person has a bank deposit of ten million rupees and another one has a literary talent widely recognised in the country. Who, in this case, is more powerful ? The two properties being not of the same character, it is impossible to make a comparative assessment of the magnitude of power of these two actors on the basis of an estimate of their respective properties. If, however, the activity of these two actors to be known in terms of their respective behaviour is taken as the basis of one's assessment, that is, if the behavioural consequences of money, on the one hand, and those of literary talents, on the other, are compared, then one can, of course, make a comparative assessment of the power of these two actors.

Political Sociology

Power, in addition to being relational and behavioural, is also situational. That is to say, to know power one has necessarily to relate it to a specific situation or a specific role and an actor's power in one particular situation or role may vary from that in others. The Speaker of the Indian Lok Sabha who has power over the members of the Lok Sabha in the context of parliamentary sessions does not have power over the other aspects of their social and political life.

In his *Modern Political Analysis* Robert A. Dahl discusses four different ways of detecting power relations in a particular situation. In the first place, one may try to measure power by necessarily relating it to an office. Here the assumption is that power operates only within the framework of a formal office. Thus, on this criterion, he who holds no office will be treated as having no power, those occupying the major offices will be regarded as very powerful and he who holds the highest office will be recognised as the most powerful. The advantage of this technique is its easy operability. It is easy to identify the formal offices and have information about their nature and working. But focus on formal offices may often be inadequate to grasp the nature and extent of power since in many cases power does not where in formal offices but is, instead, wielded by forces lying beyond them and managing to control the officeholders from a distance. Emphasis on formal office misses the role of these kingmakers and invisible bosses and hence fails to uncover the real root of power.

To fill this gap one may adopt a second technique which is to rely on well-placed judges, that is, to record the observations and impressions of those who have had the opportunity of keeping in close touch with the formal officeholders and hence fully watching the whole process of the operation of power in and around a formal office, taking due note of the role of outside forces in the exercise of power by the formal officeholder. The efficacy of this technique is largely frustrated by the fact that it is impossible to evolve a reliable criterion for

Influence and Power

selecting these well-placed observers. Again, ³“even seemingly well-placed observers can be misled by false reputations ; they may attribute great power where little or none exists. Do we need more judges, then, to judge the judges” ? And we are thus put in a vicious circle.

The third method is to avoid totally all consideration about the exercise of power in and outside a formal office and to concentrate on the actual decision-making process. This technique enquires as to what people actually do, that is, what is the nature and level of their participation in the actual decision-making process. Here he who is found to be most involved in the decision-making process will be reckoned as the most powerful. But here too there is a difficulty because mere participation in the decision-making process is not always a true index of power. The Vice-Chancellor of a university and his Confidential Secretary do alike participate in the decision-making process, but the gap between their respective power-positions is too wide to allow any comparison between the two.

So a mere look at participation in the decision-making process is not enough and this is what necessitates the application of a fourth type of technique which is to weigh the activities of different participants in the decision-making and coming to a judgment about the nature and extent of power after carefully comparing these activities. That is, this method would try to see who among the participants did initiate how many of the proposals and in how many cases these proposals have ultimately been converted into policies and, further, who have opposed the proposals of whom and in how many cases they have been successful in this opposition. But even in this method there may be difficulties. Suppose, among two participants whose relative power is sought to be detected, one initiates two proposals both of which reach the policy stage without any opposition while the other puts up only one proposal, but successfully gets it adopted in the face of stiff opposition. In such a case, relying on the fourth method, it is difficult to determine

Political Sociology

who is more powerful of the two. And it is difficulty of this kind that makes the other three methods not altogether useless. The whole thing, however, depends on the nature of a given situation and a good deal of care and caution will always be necessary. In any case, while observing a power relation one has to keep in mind three aspects of power that will require his attention : these are the weight, the scope and the domain of power. The weight of power means the degree of participation in the making of decisions, its scope means the values at stake and the domain of power refers to the persons over whom power is exercised.

What, then, are the visible signs of a power relation ? How shall we define power ? According to Robert Dahl "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do". It means that A does not have power over B when B does X which he normally does. A has power over B only when B does not do X which he normally does, but instead does Y. Here the main focus is not on the actions and intentions of the power holder, i.e., the actor exercising power, but on the enquiry as to whether the power addressee, i.e., the actor against whom power is exercised, does something in opposition to his own intentions. Unless there is this opposition there cannot be a power relation. It is not difficult to understand why Dahl puts his thrust this way. He considers sanction as the most important attribute of power. Effectivity of this sanction, which, indeed, is the test of one's power potentials, can only be known by seeing how far the power addressee moves from where he was before the exercise of power against him. Theoretically there is nothing to say against Dahl's definition. Power involves sanction which makes sense only when it brings about a change in the position of the power addressee and this change in position makes sense only when it is a positive change from the normal established position. However, this definition is applicable in ideal conditions where the power addressee never hesitates to expose what his

Influence and Power

original interests and intentions were and how in the context of power relations he has had to accept a change in them. This ideal condition may be found only in those cases where the relation between the power holder and the power addressee is very intimate, where the psychological and, in some cases, also the material cost for this admission is very low or negligible. Thus it is possible to see a student openly admitting the power of his teacher over him, candidly narrating how, under the influence of his teacher, he has changed from his original position. But in many other situations, specially in political situations which are marked by a constant competition for power, this may not be so. Thus it is difficult to expect the management of a firm to admit that the policies it is following are contrary to its original will and are in accordance with the intentions of the trade union leaders. More so in a political situation. A nation accepting a change in its course of actions under the influence of a powerful nation will hardly acknowledge this and go on claiming that this change is a result of its own free will. In such situations it is, no doubt, extremely difficult to apply Dahl's definition.

This difficulty can perhaps be overcome, if we rely on the definition given by Herbert Goldhamer and Edward A. Shils according to whom, "A person may be said to have power to the extent that he influences the behaviour of others in accordance with his own intentions". The difference between this definition and that of Dahl is evident. While Dahl's emphasis is more on the power addressee, on the difference between the acts done by the power addressee in accordance with and in opposition to his own will, the emphasis of Goldhamer and Shils is on the power holder, on his own intentions. On the basis of the criterion provided by Goldhamer and Shils, one has, first, to determine the intentions of the power holder and then see whether the policies adopted by the power addressee follow these intentions. If they do, then the former will be regarded as having power over the latter. Here it is unnecessary to

Political Sociology

enquire whether the power addressee openly acknowledges a change in his original position under the influence of the power holder and so the task of determining power becomes relatively easy. Thus the definition of Goldhamer and Shils seems more attractive than that of Dahl.

But this definition also is not free from difficulties. What, for instance, would happen, if the power holder does not communicate to the power addressee what his intentions are? In a situation where B does not know what are the intentions of A, but follows a course of action which is in full accordance with A's intentions, can we say that A is powerful over B? The answer should clearly be in the negative because to be powerful A will have to influence the behaviour of B in accordance with his intentions which means that intentions of A are not enough; there must be the effect of these intentions on the behaviour of B. That is to say, the intentions of the power holder have to be effective in order to constitute a power relation and that is not possible unless these intentions are communicated to the power addressee. Thus the definition given by Goldhamer and Shils must be understood to mean that there must be some contact or communications between the power holder and the power addressee. In order to make an actor powerful his intentions together with an act on his part to communicate these intentions are essential. Indeed, coercion which is an indispensable part of power involves this act of communication.

This communication, however, may not always be direct or overt. This will be better known, if we scan the different forms of coercion. Coercion may assume one of several forms which are force, domination and manipulation. Force implies physical activity, i.e., it involves the employment of visible resources. These resources are employed not for nothing. Hence, in such a case the intentions of the actor influencing are clearly communicated; perhaps there is too much of this communication. Domination which is often found to be associated

Influence and Power

with force may not necessarily involve force; it takes place whenever an actor makes explicit to others what he wants them to do. So in such a case too there is a clear communication of intentions. Coercion, however, may sometimes take the form of manipulation. Manipulation is the attempt to influence others' behaviour without manifesting the actual intentions; here the actor doing at the other actor's bidding is not aware that he is doing so. Manipulation is often made use of in political situations. The most powerful in political situations often act behind the scenes, thus avoiding direct communications.

A power relation, however, is not fully known unless the power bases are correctly identified. Power may have various bases which differ from culture to culture and also from one power structure to another within a culture. One may have power over another because of his possession of a vast amount of wealth; here wealth is the power base. Similarly, in another situation, one may have power over another because of his control over the instruments of violence or a power holder may have his outstanding skill as his power base. Sometimes power itself may be a power base. Power over one issue-area may often serve as a good base for extending power to other issue-areas. Mere presence of a power base, of course, is not enough; there must be together with it the ability to use this power base. The power base coupled with this ability constitutes the capability for power. In addition to this capability, to constitute a power relation what is necessary is a will or desire on the part of the actor influencing to control the actions of others. Thus power emerges whenever the capability for power is combined with a will to affect the behaviour of others.

Many power actions often generate a feedback, tending to establish a symmetrical relation between the power holder and the power addressee. That is to say, an actor not only exercises power over another, but, in order to maintain this power relation, may also have to modify some of his positions in accord-

Political Sociology

ance with the interests of the latter. In political situations such kind of things often happens. Hence it is only proper to regard the power relation as symmetrical. But symmetrical power relation frustrates all attempt to measure and compare power. Because, if to measure the power of A one has to take note of how much effect there has been in the behaviour of B in accordance with the intentions of A, then acceptance of a symmetrical relation between A and B, i.e., admission of the fact that A not only affects B's behaviour, but B as well brings a change in the position of A will make it impossible to determine to what extent A is powerful over B and also to compare the power of A and B. ⁶"This difficulty can be handled in either of two ways : (1) we can give up the idea that the relation is asymmetrical ; or (2) we can add an asymmetrical relation operating in the opposite direction from the first. If the processes of influence take time, and particularly if the time lags associated with the two asymmetrical relations are different, there is at least the possibility that we can make separate empirical observations of the two relations." Thus, taking power as an asymmetrical relation, we may take the two power relations between A and B separately and this is quite justified since in most cases there is a time lag between the operation of these two sets of power relations.

In every society where power exists man seeks power. The extent to which this power-seeking will be met with success depends on how much capability and will the power-seeker possesses. Hence the power-seekers are not necessarily the powerful. But once power is acquired, the powerful tries to gain more power because of the instrumental value of power. Power once secured can be used to achieve a great variety of ends like fame, reverence, security, respect, affection, wealth and many other values. Hence he who has acquired power will invariably try to extend it. This search for further power may be checked by the similar search by other power holders. The powerful is subdued by the more powerful. Thus power

Influence and Power

limits power. Power, however, is also limited by other factors. Sometimes an actor's tendency to gain more power may be limited by his physical and psychological endowments. Sometimes the high technicality of a situation demands a great skill for having more power, which an actor may not just have because of a lack of opportunity to learn the necessary things. Again, "the social order is equally important as a limitation on power. The mores at any given time may put outside the scope of power such practices as those of religion or sex. In some societies mores directly concern power itself, sanctions being applied, for example, to any sort of personal ambition or aggressiveness".

By now it is clear that power being essentially relational, it invariably presupposes some kind of social relation and it is this social relation that conditions the character and operation of power. What kind of power base an actor can use, what type of skill he may apply in using this power base, what kind of sanctions he may apply, the nature of reaction of the power addressee to these sanctions—all these things are largely dependent on the type of the social order in the context of which these things happen. Thus the power of a voluntary group will vary depending on whether the social setting is basically rural or urban.

Political Sociology approaches what is traditionally called political power, that is, power that operates within the periphery of the state and its institutions, in terms of its understanding of power in general. The only speciality in the power of the state that it recognises is that the state can afford to wield the strongest power since it is able to reserve for itself the right to apply the severest sanctions like imprisonment and death penalty. But, besides this, in all other respects there is basically no difference between the power of the state and the power to be found at any level of society. Hence to comprehend the character and operation of political power Political Sociology places it in the perspective of social variables.

Political Sociology

That is, it insists that political power is necessarily conditioned by the social process, that political power will differ according to the variations in the nature and working of the social process. Thus the same set of political institutions produce different results in different social environments.

The nature of political power cannot be fully known unless the pattern of its distribution is thoroughly studied. The way the political power is distributed determines who are the most powerful in a political community and also who thus play a decisive role in the reconciliation of conflicts that constitutes the content of politics. Political Sociology, therefore, does not only seek to analyse political power against the background of the social process, but proceeds further to investigate the pattern of the distribution of political power.

REFERENCES

1. Harold D. Lasswell & Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961, p. 71.
2. Ibid, p. 73.
3. Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, Prentice-Hall of India (Private) Ltd., New Delhi, 1965, p. 52.
4. Robert A. Dahl, "The Concept of Power" in S. Sidney Ulmer (ed.), *Introductory Readings in Political Behaviour*, Chicago : Rand McNally, 1962, p. 344.
5. Herbert Goldhamer & Edward A. Shils, "Types of Power and Status" in Ulmer, op. cit., p. 334.
6. Herbert A. Simon, "Notes on the Observation and Measurement of Political Power" in W. D. Hawley & F. M. Wirt (eds.), *The Search For Community Power*, Prentice-Hall, Inc, New Jersey, 1968, p. 25.
7. Lasswell & Kaplan, op. cit., p. 96.

CHAPTER 4

DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL POWER

Society is essentially a system of very many power relations like political, social, economic, religious, moral, cultural and others. The most important and, indeed, the strongest among these different kinds of power is the political power since it is wielded by the state that monopolises the use of severest sanctions. As the society in the context of which the state exercises the political power is characterised by an uneven distribution of resources, similarly political power also is not evenly distributed in a society. In every political system political power tends to be concentrated at the hands of a few or a minority. How does it so happen is the question that has given rise to what are styled in Political Sociology as elite theories.

A study of elite theories cannot begin without a reference to the theory of Karl Marx to refute which was, indeed, the central purpose shared by all the exponents of the classical elitist thesis. Besides, a search for understanding the pattern of the distribution of political power cannot be made without taking due note of the Marxist theory since it represents one of the earliest attempts to throw light on how political power is distributed in a society. One of the major premises in the Marxist thesis is that in every society, save for the most primitive, political power is unevenly distributed. In such a society there is a ruling class which monopolises the possession and exercise of political power over the subject class or classes. This concentration of political power at the hands of the ruling class is to be explained by the pattern of ownership of the means of production. The ruling class is politically dominant just because it owns the major instruments of economic production. The ruling class thus is not only a political ruling class, but an economic ruling class as well. And it is by virtue of its econo-

Political Sociology

mic power that the ruling class is able to consolidate its position by establishing its hold over military force and over the production of ideas. Marx thus views the political leader as invariably a representative of the dominant class and considers socio-economic factors as the only determinant of the distribution of political power.

Marx, however, does not take this uneven distribution of power as final and unchangeable. Such an order, he argues, is marked by a perpetual conflict between the ruling class which owns the means of production and hence rules the society and the subject class or classes whose untold sufferings impel them to organise in antagonism to the ruling class. The nature and course of such conflict is primarily conditioned by the development of productive forces. Thus in modern capitalist societies where the divergence of economic interests is the sharpest, where the excessive concentration of wealth at the hands of the ruling class meaning abysmal poverty for the working class sharpens the polarisation of classes this class conflict becomes intense leading, eventually, to the overthrow of the ruling class and the victory of the working class—a victory to be ultimately followed by the emergence of a classless society. Thus Marx not only analysed the allocative pattern of political power in terms of socio-economic factors, but also envisaged the inevitability of a radical change in this distribution of power.

The classical elitist thesis as expounded by Pareto, Mosca and Michels was employed to challenge the Marxist position on some of its important aspects. In the first place, these elite theorists refuse to accept the Marxist position that political structures are a mere reflection of socio-economic relations. According to them, economic factors, although not unimportant, are not the only source determining the power structure of a society; the sources of power of the political elites are many and the political means at their disposal are extremely important with which they can control, accommodate and even counter-act economic forces. Secondly, while the elite theorists agree

Distribution of Political Power

with Marx that political power is unevenly distributed in a society, they discard the Marxist idea of the inaccessibility of the ruling class leading to a polarisation of the ruling class and the ruled classes. They believe in a continual circulation of elites. That is, they argue that although the elite remains distinct from others, yet it has to remain accessible to the influence of the non-elite since it will have to recruit new personnel from the latter in order to retain its power position. Thus, unlike Marx, the elitists reject the possibility of the formation of a stable and closed ruling class. Thirdly, the elitists find no validity in the Marxist idea of a future classless, egalitarian society; they accept the hierarchical structure of society as the inevitable order.

Despite these major differences between the Marxist theory of the ruling class and the grand theory of political elites some elements of Marxism are noticeable in some of the later versions of the elitist thesis like that of Burnham. Further, there has also been ¹an attempt to work out a synthesis of the contributions of Marx and Pareto. This attempt to make a complementary use of Marxism and elitism is all very understandable in view of the basic fact that both the Marxists and the elitists agree on the essential point that political power in a society always rests at the hands of a few. The authenticity of this fact has, further, been sought to be tested at empirical levels which has brought in newer ramifications of and also strong challenges against the elitist idea.

Within the grand theory of political elites there are different varieties which can be classified, after ²Geraint Parry, in the following way : (i) the organisational approach represented by Mosca and Michels, (ii) the psychological approach represented by Pareto, (iii) the economic approach represented by Burnham and (iv) the institutional approach represented by Wright Mills.

In his *The Ruling Class* Gaetano Mosca argues that society, throughout history, has always been found to be divided between the ruling class and the class that is ruled. ³"In all

Political Sociology

societies—from societies that are very meagrely developed and have barely attained the dawnings of civilisation, down to the most advanced and powerful societies—two classes of people appear—a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolises power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first, in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent.” Thus, according to Mosca, the society is ruled by the minority, the elite or the ‘political class’, as he prefers to call it. The elite is composed of superior individuals who have come to occupy the elite position by virtue of their possession of some attributes—economic, military or religious—which are, in fact, or, at least in the estimation of others, highly valuable attributes. Once the elite position is thus secured, the elite manages to maintain its control over others just because it is organised and it is able to be organised only because it is a minority. A minority is always better organised. Since the number of its members is small its internal channels of communication and information are quite simple and its members can have a speedy contact among themselves. Accordingly, the minority, achieving a high level of solidarity, presents itself as a conscious, cohesive and also as a conspiratorial group—i.e., a group having a common will to action—in the face of which the unorganised majority has no other choice than to be ruled by the former. “The power of any minority is irresistible as against each single individual in the majority, who stands alone before the totality of the organised minority.”

The elite, however, cannot effectively rule just because it is powerful. Its successful exercise of power is dependent on the use of what Mosca calls ‘political formula’. The political formula means an attempt on the part of the political elite to provide a moral and legal basis to its power, ⁵“representing it as the logical and necessary consequence of doctrines and

Distribution of Political Power

beliefs that are generally recognised and accepted". The political formula being thus a mere strategy of rule may not really be morally sound; indeed, in most cases it may simply be a plausible myth that is accepted by the people. Yet, by insisting on this, Mosca makes it clear that the elite can rule not by mere physical force, but needs a convincing show of having a moral foundation of this physical force. In other words, what is sought to be stressed is that the elite is constantly under the necessity of taking some account of the desires of the majority.

The position of the political class, however, is never permanent. It is likely to be affected by the growth of new interests and ideals in the society and the emergence of new problems. When in the society new economic interests develop or there emerges a new religion or a new kind of knowledge or a new ideological movement gathers momentum, the dominance of the elite is affected. In such situations the elite will have to make compromise that will suit the new interests of the society and yet will not throw it off from its position of power. One way of making such compromise is to adapt its policies to meet the new pressures coming from below. But, on occasions, for averting a violent situation it may be necessary for the elite to open its ranks to the newer elements and thus admit a change in the composition of the class and the interests it represents. This, of course, would not mean the end of the old ruling class and the advent of a new one. All it means is the assimilation of the new elements into the old political class. Thus it is not, in any case, a total revolution, but only a fusion of the old and the new elements. "The established elite would be renewed and invigorated by the ablest representatives of the new forces in the new society. At the same time the new elements in turn become imbued with certain of the values of the elite."

Like Mosca, Roberto Michels in his *Political Parties* holds an organisational approach to the question of elite control, although his treatment of the problem is much different from that of Mosca. While Mosca believes that the elite manages to main-

Political Sociology

tain its control by virtue of its organisational ability that flows from the very fact of its being a minority, Michels contends that the very structure of modern organised society gives birth to elite rule. According to him, under the conditions of modern society no movement or party can hope to succeed without organisation. But in any organisation of any size leadership is vitally necessary for its success and survival. No organisation can work without giving power and advantage to a group of people who are its leaders. "Who says organisation, says oligarchy." And Michels advances two reasons that account for this phenomenon—one, organisational and the other, psychological. As a movement or party grows in size and organisation, it requires technical expertise which the general mass are incapable of providing because they have neither an aptitude nor the adequate leisure for this. Only an inner circle of officers and leaders can provide this technical expertise and because of this technical indispensability of theirs power and control naturally pass into their hands. They acquire freedom of action and a vested interest in their position and thus oligarchy is established.

The growth of this oligarchy is further influenced by a peculiar psychology of the mass mind. The majority of human beings, Michels believes, are apathetic, indolent, ignorant and slavish. Incapable of self-government, they have a psychological need for guidance. Hence they are only too glad to have others assume political responsibilities for them. The elite fully takes advantage of this mass psychology to perpetuate itself in power. According to Michels, this oligarchic rule is so stable and irremovable that there can never be an absolute exchange or displacement of the class at the top by a class at the bottom. Of course, new elements may sometimes be drawn into the elite at the top from the lower level. But it is only an amalgamation of new elements with the old one in the sense that the character of the ruling elite never undergoes any change; on the contrary, those drawn from below assume the character of the people at the top. Michels does not deny that the masses

Distribution of Political Power

revolt from time to time, but their revolts, he adds, are always suppressed. Even when a revolution is successful, it does not mean an end of the elite rule. Because, the masses cannot revolt without leadership and, in case the revolution is successful, these leaders, having achieved power in the name of the people, quickly transform themselves into a relatively closed caste apart from and opposed to the people. They become totally 'bourgeoisified' and thus a successful revolution may only mean the replacement of the existing elite by a 'proletarian elite'.

Unlike Mosca and Michels, Vilfredo Pareto, in his *The Mind and Society*, seeks to explain the elite control in terms of certain fundamental psychological factors which, he believes, are constantly present throughout human history. Pareto begins his theory with a very general definition of the elite. He argues that in every branch of human activity an individual may be given an index as a measurement of his ability. Thus the top lawyer may be awarded 10 and the lawyer who gets no brief may be given 0. In this way a class of people having the highest indices in their respective branches of activity may be identified and it is to this class that Pareto gives the name elite. This elite may further be subdivided into two classes; a governing elite comprising people who directly or indirectly play an important part in government and a non-governing elite comprising those whose activities are not significant for politics.

Pareto, however, is quick to admit that this theoretical formulation is of little help since in actual practice it rarely happens that those having the highest ability do, in fact, reach the top position. Things like wealth, birth and even corruption are often found to lift the less skilled to the highest position, specially in politics. Hence Pareto ultimately concerns himself with a simple distinction between those having power called the elite and those having none called the non-elite and sees the history of every human society as the history of the relations between its elite who rules and its non-elites who are

Political Sociology

just ruled.

After defining elite in this way, Pareto proceeds forward to account for elite control and this is where he applies his psychological approach. According to Pareto, human actions may be divided into two types—logical and non-logical. Logical actions are those directed to attainable ends and employing means appropriate to that end and non-logical actions are marked by an absence of these qualities. Most human actions, Pareto believes, are non-logical actions. Yet men frequently try to present their non-logical actions as logical actions. On closer analysis, this attempt to present non-logical actions as logical is found to be composed of two elements which are derivations and residues. Residues are the manifestations of sentiments or instincts. Thus asceticism would be a manifestation of the instinct or urge for self-punishment. Derivations are the rationalisations or justifications of these residues. According to Pareto there are six types of residues which are : (i) residues of combinations, (ii) residues of the persistence of aggregates, (iii) residues of sociability, (iv) residues of activity, (v) residues of the integrity of the individual and (vi) residues of sex. Of these the first two classes of residues are relevant to the question of elite control. Class I residues—the residues of combinations—represent tendencies to originate, manipulate and combine institutions and ideas by the use of imagination ; that is, here cunning is the most important means. Class II residues—the residues of the persistence of aggregates—are the expressions of an urge to consolidate positions once they are established. These are the manifestations of instincts for permanence, stability and order ; that is, here force is predominantly applied.

Men, Pareto argues, have a predominance of either class I residues where they are the 'foxes' or of class II residues where they are the 'lions' and the style of governing will depend on whether the ruling elite is composed of the foxes or the lions. The foxes are bold and adventurous ; they do not care to be

Distribution of Political Power

cautious and live by cunning and cleverness. In the economic sphere they are the speculators ; they do not dread risks for the sake of maximum profits and indulge in promotion schemes. The lions, on the other hand, are solid, conservative, tradition-loving, loyal to family, church and nation, and always preferring to rely on force rather than on cleverness. In their economic life they are the rentiers ; they are cautious, thrifty, content with small returns on safe investments and unwilling to gamble. The elite is composed of either of these types of individuals, depending on the sort of residues that happen to prevail. When class I residues are dominant the foxes will rule and the predominance of class II residues will establish the rule by the lions. Indeed, history reveals a constant alteration between an elite having the dominant class I residues and an elite having the preponderance of class II residues.

Besides this circulation of elites in the sense of being a replacement of one elite by another, there can also be a circulation of elites in the sense of being a process by which individuals circulate between the elite and the non-elite. This process of replacement takes place in two ways—either by a gradual process of infiltration or by a violent revolution. And Pareto explains all this in terms of changes in the psychological characteristics of the members of the elite, on the one hand, and those of the lower strata, on the other. Thus, when the elite no longer possesses the residues necessary for keeping it in power and, at the same time, at the lower strata of society the necessary residues are sufficiently manifest, then the declining elite recruits new elements from the lower strata and thereby restores its vitality. Or it may so happen that an elite decaying in the necessary residues is violently overthrown by the lower classes strong in the requisite residues who thus become the new elite equipped with the residues necessary for keeping them in power. What is worth noting is that in all such cases of change there is no real transformation of the social structure. Despite changes brought in by this circulation the

Political Sociology

form of society remains unchanged since it is always a society in which the elite rules over the majority of population.

James Burnham in his *The Managerial Revolution* is an elitist in as far as he clings to the central elitist hypothesis that in every society a small group—the elite—will invariably rule. There can, of course, be a change in the composition of the elite, but there can never be an end to the elite rule, making the classless, egalitarian society an impossibility. Burnham thus rejects the Marxist conclusion. But, in any case, he utilises the central Marxist hypothesis in as far as he believes that the source of power of the elite is decidedly economic. According to Burnham, a group achieves dominance in a society by means of its control over the means of production. By virtue of this control this group is able to deny others an access to the means of production and enjoys a preferential treatment in the distribution of the product. It is this economic control that gives rise to political power and social prestige and thus the elite is formed.

The elite thus established, however, faces a crisis in the capitalist society. In the capitalist society the capitalists—the formal owners of the means of production—were originally the managers of their enterprises and thus engaged in the actual operations of production. But gradually they abdicate the managerial job in favour of the professional managers who are indispensable for the modern productive process, concentrate only on financing and thus get divorced from the actual productive process. Finally, the capitalist class retire even from financing and remain only a leisured class, spending the profits from their enterprises without making any contribution to production. In this way, the capitalists are totally divorced from the production process which passes into the hands of a managerial class who begin regulating access to the means of production, although, in the initial stage, they allow the preferential treatment to be enjoyed by the leisured capitalist class. Eventually, this managerial class would establish total control in the economic sphere, controlling the means of production and

Distribution of Political Power

receiving the preferential treatment and thus the capitalist class will be finally replaced by the managerial elite. The economic power of the managerial elite will bring in its political power and thus, according to Burnham, the government in modern declining capitalist societies will ultimately be run by the managers—the bureaucrats.

C. Wright Mills refuses to share Burnham's belief that political power of the elite results from its economic power. Indeed, to clearly indicate his distaste for taking ownership of the means of production as the necessary explanation for the emergence of the political elite Mills uses the term power elite and not the ruling class since to him the very term class smacks of an economic determinism. Power, according to Mills, tends to be institutionalised. Against the background of his study of the American society—which is embodied in his book *The Power Elite*—he comes to this conclusion that the political elite or the power elite is the product of the institutional landscape of the society. Mills defines the power elite as those who occupy the command posts and argues that in a society certain institutions hold a pivotal position and persons placed at the topmost ranks of hierarchy in these institutions occupy the command posts of the social structure and, therefore, they are the power elite. In the American society Mills locates the power elite within three major institutions—the military, the big corporations and the political executive. They are the power elite because they are at the top of the hierarchy of these key institutions in the society. Power, thus according to Mills, is attached to institutions and the elite formation is made possible only in the context of these vital institutions. The leaders occupying the command positions in the three principal institutions—economic, military and political—are, actually, a cohesive group, their cohesiveness resulting, on the one hand, from the similarity of their social origins and, on the other, from an institutional proximity that is manifest in their close interconnections and also in a free interflow of personnel among them. The greater

Political Sociology

is this institutional proximity, the higher degree of cohesiveness the power elite achieves. This institutional proximity, further, leads the power elite to have a shared style of life and a sense of unity. Thus the power elite is not only a cohesive group, but also is a conscious and conspiratorial group. This coherent, united and self-conscious power elite representing a minority of people working at command positions of the key institutions of modern society is the most powerful in as far as it is able to 'make history', i.e., able to change the course of actions of large numbers of persons in a significant and decisive way. In the face of this power elite the mass is fragmented, subdued and even unaware of the part it can play in the total structure; it only ⁸"fulfils the routines that exist".

It thus appears that all the elite theorists, despite variations in the exposition of their respective doctrines, agree on certain fundamental points. These are, first, that political power is invariably concentrated in a few hands. All societies, whatever their outward political form, are ruled by a minority of the total population, who are the political elite. This political elite is powerful because it has organising ability resulting from the fact of its being a minority (Mosca) or because no organisation can work without a powerful leadership (Michels) or because it possesses the requisite psychological qualities (Pareto) or because it controls the means of production (Burnham) or because it occupies command positions in the key institutions of society (Wright Mills). Secondly, the elite rules always as a self-conscious, cohesive and conspiratorial group. These characteristics of the elite are the indices of its immense power for which the disorganised and subdued majority have no other choice than to be ruled and are, in fact, incapable of effectively controlling the minority at the top. Thirdly, the elitists consider power as cumulative. That is to say, according to them, power brings in more power. It is a means to securing economic wealth or social prestige and that, in turn, can be transmitted into further power. In other words, the polit-

Distribution of Political Power

ical power structure follows the other lines of social stratification. All this puts the political elite in a highly advantageous position where it can fully regulate the entry of the non-elite into it in such a way that the latter can only have an entry into the elite group just on the former's own terms.

But how far does the elitist thesis correspond to reality? Is there in every society always a single centre of political power? Can the political elite be identified as a self-conscious, cohesive and conspiratorial group? In recent times there have been many attempts to test these vital questions at the empirical level. A common feature of most of these efforts is that none of them has been carried on at the national level, but, instead, has been confined within the smaller communities like city, town or village. Indeed, to study the elite question at the national level is fraught with too many practical difficulties the chief among which is the non-availability of reliable data at the national level. Hence the major chunk of the empirical test of elite theories has been sought to be done at the community level. Among these community studies two categories can be clearly identified—one supporting the major contention of the elite theorists and the other refuting the elitist argument and replacing it by what is known as the pluralist thesis. Some of the important works in the first category are Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd's *Middletown in Transition*, August B. Hollingshead's *Elmtown's Youth* and Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structure* and some reputed works in the second category are Nelson W. Polsby's *Community Power and Political Theory* and Robert A. Dahl's *Who Governs?*

In his *Community Power Structure*, Floyd Hunter studies the leadership question in Atlanta when it was a regional city. Hunter first makes a preliminary list of 175 leaders who hold formal important positions in politics, business and civic organisations and have 'reputation' for leadership in the eyes of those who have nominated them. This criterion of reputation—which has led others to call Hunter's method the reputational

Political Sociology

approach—is further made use of by Hunter when he selects a panel of 14 judges representing religious, business and professional interests and asks them to select those who, in their eyes, are the top leaders among these 175 people. Only 40 people are found to have reputation for leadership in the eyes of these judges.

Hunter then interviews 27 out of these 40 persons in order to know who, in their opinion, are the agreed top ten among them. By carrying his empirical enquiry in Atlanta in this way Hunter arrives at a result that seems to be confirming the elitist thesis—a result that shows that in Atlanta a clearly defined group of decision-makers can be identified who are highly organised and who decisively dominate the public life of the city. About half of these leaders are found to be businessmen. Thus Hunter ultimately concludes that the city of Atlanta is ruled by a cohesive, conscious and conspiratorial elite of businessmen.

The pluralists, on the other hand, challenge the main elitist contention that a society is marked by the existence of a single centre of political power. They argue that in a society there are multiple centres of power, none of which is completely sovereign. Further, these centres of power do not overlap or coalesce from issue-area to issue-area in any consistent way. In other words, society is essentially pluralistic. The power of leaders is greatly limited by other leaders and also by those who are led. The decision-making, the pluralists argue, may be done by a few, but then this decision-making cannot be understood except within the context of a continuous bargaining process among the elites and also of a general consensus established only through a mass approval that is costly to secure.

Following this line Robert Dahl establishes some of the general criticisms against the elite theory in his article "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model". In the first place, he argues that the elite theory confuses potential control with actual control. He agrees that it is quite possible that a group in a society has a very high potential for control, but that does not

Distribution of Political Power

automatically make this group very powerful since the actual power effectivity of a group is established not only by a high potential for control but also by a high potential for unity. And it may often happen that a group has a high potential for control, but a low potential for unity—a fact that is totally overlooked by the elitists. Secondly, Dahl admits that in a society political power is often unevenly distributed, that is, some individuals have more influence over key decisions than others. But he is quick to add that this absence of political equality does not necessarily prove the existence of a ruling elite, as the elite theories claim. Thirdly, according to Dahl, the elite theories disregard the fact that there may be different scopes of power and that a group having a high degree of influence over one scope may not necessarily have the similar degree of influence over another scope within the same system.

Dahl in his *Who Governs?*—which contains his empirical investigation of the process of decision-making in New Haven—empirically falsifies the elitist thesis and shows that power, actually, is distributed pluralistically. Dahl's major purpose in his *Who Governs?* is to examine some significant decisions in order to see, in the first place, whether one group is dominant in many decision-areas or only in one, secondly, how far the decision-makers operate as a conscious, cohesive and conspiratorial group and, thirdly, whether power is actually cumulative. Accordingly, Dahl selects three distinct decision-areas covering urban development, public schools and political nominations. Within each issue-area he studies a number of decisions. Then he picks up three categories of potential leaders which are politicians, 'social notables' and 'economic notables' and enquires whether each of these groups participated in decision-making only in one or in all of the three issue-areas. He takes as the sign of power the ability to successfully initiate or veto proposal for policies.

After examining all the available data, Dahl comes to the conclusion that the structure of decision-making in New Haven

Political Sociology

is essentially pluralistic. It is true that in New Haven a tiny group, the leaders, exert great influence. But individuals who are influential in one sector of public activity are found not to be influential in another sector and, further, leaders exerting influence in different issue-areas do not seem to be drawn from a single homogeneous stratum of the community. Thus in New Haven there is not one elite, but many elites and these elites never form a cohesive, conscious and conspiratorial group. Again, Dahl discovers that in New Haven resources are unevenly distributed; some have more resources and more influence than others. But the elitist thesis that this inequality of resources tends to make power cumulative seems to be negated in New Haven. In New Haven wealth does not necessarily give rise to political power nor social status to economic power. Despite inequalities in the possession of resources virtually no one and, certainly, no group of more than a few individuals is entirely lacking in them.

Society, then, according to Dahl is basically a polyarchy where a large number of minority groups operate possessing a variety of political resources that are unevenly distributed among them and are, naturally, used by them with different degrees of intensity and efficiency and hence there is no single elite as claimed by the elitists. In other words, political power is determined not by hierarchical, but by horizontal relationships.

Dahl's pluralist model, however, has been subjected to severe criticisms. Two of the most important of these criticisms are, first, the pluralist model of Dahl wrongly locates power in concrete decisions or in activities having direct bearing upon their making. ¹⁰"Of course power is exercised when A participates in the making of decisions that affect B. But power is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A. To the extent that A succeeds in doing this, B is prevented,

Distribution of Political Power

for all practical purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues that might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to A's set of preferences." In other words, power is not only exercised through decision-making, but also through the ability to confine the scope of decision-making to relatively safe issues, thus making the non-decision-making process as much important and this is what is overlooked by Dahl. And, secondly, because of this mistake, it is further alleged by the critics, Dahl's model fails to differentiate the unimportant issues from the important issues arising in the political arena. The distinction between important and unimportant issues cannot properly be made unless it is sought to be made in the context of the dominant values and biases in the society. Dahl, however, does not take into account these values and biases. To him the only criterion of an important issue is the presence of actual disagreement in preferences among two or more groups. But this can hardly be a satisfactory criterion since groups can have disagreements in preferences on important as well as on unimportant issues.

Whatever divergence we are able to detect between the elite theory, on the one hand, and the pluralist amendment, on the other, we should not ignore their point of convergence which is that political power, in any case, is unevenly distributed, that political decisions are made only by the few and not by all. They differ on the question as to who exactly are these powerful few and also how they do actually operate. While the elite theory asserts that there is only one minority in the society which is a cohesive group having almost identical social background and very much conscious of its own exclusiveness, the pluralists believe that there are several minorities each of which cannot dominate the decision-making process in all the issue-areas and each of which, further, vies with others to secure the consent of those who are ruled. Thus the fact remains that political power is always unevenly distributed and if this is so, then it is interesting to know how in the context

Political Sociology

of this peculiarity in its allocative pattern political power is legitimised in a society. And that brings us to the concept of authority.

REFERENCES

1. This has been done by Raymond Aron. See his two articles with the title "Social Structure and the Ruling Class" in *British Journal of Sociology*, March, 1950 and June, 1950.
2. Geraint Parry, *Political Elites*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1970.
3. G. Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1939, p. 50.
4. *Ibid*, p. 53.
5. *Ibid*, p. 70.
6. G. Parry, *Political Elites*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1970, p. 59.
7. R. Michels, *Political Parties*, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1958, p. 418.
8. C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*, OUP, Galaxy Edition, 1959, p. 322.
9. Robert A. Dahl, "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model" in *The American Political Science Review*, June, 1958.
10. P. Bachrach & M. S. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power" in W. D. Hawley & F. M. Wirt (eds.), *The Search For Community Power*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New Jersey, 1968, pp. 241-42.

CHAPTER 5

AUTHORITY

In the midst of various power relations in a society political power stands pre-eminent since it seems to have a stable foundation that ensures its smooth and continuous operation without much difficulty. It is because of this stability inherent in political power that political agencies are capable of effectively resolving the conflicts that continuously emerge in a society, thereby making politics a permanent affair in our social life. But whence is derived this stability of political power? As political power involves the use of severest sanctions, one may tend to think that it is this ability to use the strongest coercive force that may account for the stable foundation of political power. But that would, in effect, mean resting one's compliance on nothing but crass fear—a proposition that has, for ages, suffered serious setback at the hands of many political philosophers and that also is found to be untenable sociologically since one of the basic premises in sociology is that social control involving the use of various types of sanctions makes sense only in the context of a conviction of those who submit to this control that it has a functional necessity for them or for the group to which they belong.

Hence Political Sociology naturally refuses to rest obedience to political power on one's fear about the sanctions involved in the exercise of political power and seeks to interpret this obedience in terms of a belief on the part of the persons obeying that it is, for some reason or other, only proper for them to do so. In other words, power in the political sphere tends to be stable, permanent and effective not only because it is based on sanctions but also because it is strengthened by legitimacy. "Belief that the structure, procedures, acts, decisions, policies, officials, or leaders of government possess the quality

Political Sociology

of 'rightness', propriety, or moral goodness and should be accepted because of this quality—irrespective of the specific content of the particular act in question—is what we mean by 'legitimacy'." When political power is thus clothed in legitimacy it is called authority in the political sphere. Authority, therefore, is a special kind of power; power, when legitimised, gives rise to authority. In other words, "authority is the faculty of inducing assent. To follow an authority is a voluntary act. Authority ends where voluntary assent ends".

Authority in the political sphere, naturally, receives our major attention because of the fact that a political system cannot be viable unless it has a stable foundation of power which, however, is impossible to achieve so long as this political power is not transformed into political authority. This, of course, does not mean that authority is a phenomenon one comes across only in the political sphere. Indeed, at all levels of our social life the operation of authority is visible. The only difference between the political sphere and the social sphere in this regard is that while in the former power in all normal situations—that is, barring the situations in which a critical condition in the political structure causes a disruption or a total collapse of political authority—is found to be invariably associated with authority, in the latter power may often be found to be divorced from authority, making it not a too infrequent sight that there is authority without power and also power without authority. Thus a father may have authority over his rude and recalcitrant son, but no power, or a local rowdy may have power for harassing his neighbours, but no authority for it. And this is what makes it imperative to clearly draw the distinction between power and authority.

Power, as we have seen, is a capacity to affect other's behaviour by the use or by a threat of using some form of sanctions. We speak of a power relation whenever as a consequence of a sanction used or threatened to be used by the power holder there is a change in the position of the power

Authority

addressee in accordance with the wishes of the former. But how to judge that this is a rightful use of power? The question of this rightfulness or propriety becomes relevant just because without it the power relation cannot last since it is impossible to accept that a power addressee will graciously go on submitting to the power holder for ever because of his fear about the sanctions. Thus to grow a durable power relation what is necessary is not merely the ability of an actor to use power, but also a right to the use of this power. This right to power cannot, of course, be taken to be a matter of mere making by the power holder as it involves not only a right of action, but also a right to compliance by others. That is to say, an actor has a right to power not when there is no bar in his trying to affect the behaviour of others, but when the latter voluntarily agree to have their position affected by the former, thereby giving him a right to compliance. Legitimacy consists in this right to compliance. And when this legitimacy is added to power, making it a right to power, authority emerges. Authority, thus, may be defined as the recognised right to exercise power irrespective of the sanctions the power holder is able to apply.

To transform power into authority is not only essential for perpetuating a power relation, but is also very much convenient and useful to a power holder as it involves the application of minimum resources. To exercise power by means of sanctions is quite expensive. To apply negative sanctions by way of giving penalties and causing deprivations, no doubt, requires sufficient resources and in case of applying positive sanctions by way of giving or promising rewards this requirement naturally will be much higher. Authority being not necessarily dependent on the use of sanctions avoids this large expenditure of resources and thereby the exercise of power is made a much less costly affair. ³"It is far more economical to rule by means of authority than by means of coercion."

This, however, does not mean that it is easy to establish

Political Sociology

authority. Indeed, it requires quite an organised effort on the part of the power holder to get his right to power recognised by the power addressee. Legitimacy, in other words, has to be secured. There may be different ways of acquiring this legitimacy and various means may be adopted for this purpose. One of these ways is to install a normative context, that is, to establish a frame of values by means of ideas. When these ideas assume a clear, coherent and articulate shape we call it ideology. In ideology there is always a strong emotive element. "That is to say, assuming that men are liable to be rational calculators in most situations, an ideology may be a device to transcend this fact by appealing to them so emotionally that they temporarily forget immediate self-interest and become absorbed in the ideological movement." And this emotive element is fully utilised by the power holder to legitimise the use of his power. The need of ideology as a dependable means for acquiring legitimacy is greater where the environment in which authority has to work is less stable, thus making the problem of legitimacy rather acute. Further, unstable environment provides the most fertile ground for nourishing the emotive elements of ideology. This is why developing societies which are marked by a lack of stability seem to provide the ideal play-ground for ideological movements whereas in the developed industrial societies one frequently hears about the 'end of ideology'.

Although ideology is an important means for justifying and perpetuating authority it also may have an opposite effect. Because ideology not only fixes a normative frame for those who obey authority but also makes it imperative for authority itself not to violate this normative order in its own operation. If a power holder continuously disregards the values in terms of which it has secured its legitimacy, then its legitimacy naturally is likely to be endangered, leading sometimes to the collapse of its authority. Again, a reigning ideology does not prevent the growth of other ideologies since it is too much

to expect that an ideology will always be universally accepted by all ; or it may so happen that to meet the newer exigencies new ideologies grow from within an ideology. The presence of contending ideologies necessitates authority to review its position and make necessary adjustments for maintaining its legitimacy and thus makes it aptly flexible. But when strong ideologies violently clash with one another the whole environment becomes fully unstable, creating enormous difficulties for the operation of authority.

It is just for these reasons that power cannot be sought to be legitimised solely by the use of ideology. There, indeed, must be a permanent source wherefrom the power holder may derive its legitimacy. Max Weber identifies three such sources which are the rational source, the traditional source and the charismatic source and corresponding to these sources there may be, according to him, three types of authority which are : the rational-legal authority, the traditional authority and the charismatic authority. In case of rational-legal authority legitimacy is derived from an office held within a system of deliberately framed rules setting out rights and duties. Obedience to authority, in such a case, is given not to the individual holding the office, but to the legally established order. ⁵“It extends to the persons exercising the authority of office under it only by virtue of the formal legality of their commands and only within the scope of authority of the office.” Thus Mrs. Gandhi enjoys authority not as a person, but as the Prime Minister of India ; the legitimacy of her right to power flows from the office of Prime Minister of India as created under the fundamental laws embodied in the Indian Constitution. In case of traditional authority the right to power results from reverence for the old-established patterns of order. Thus a tribal chief holds a position of authority just because this has been the immemorial tradition in this society and those who obey this authority share a belief in the sanctity of settled traditions. ⁶“Here the obligation of obedience is not based on the imper-

Political Sociology

sonal order, but is a matter of personal loyalty within the area of accustomed obligations." Charismatic authority, on the other hand, is established by the power holder simply by virtue of his possession of some exceptional personal qualities. Here "it is the charismatically qualified leader as such who is obeyed by virtue of personal trust in him and his revelation, his heroism or his exemplary qualities so far as they fall within the scope of the individual's belief in his charisma". Thus when a stranger joins a village school as a teacher and in no time, securing a profound trust in his personal qualities, is able to wield authority over the villagers he may be said to have established a charismatic authority.

It is thus evident that while in case of rational-legal authority obedience is given to an impersonal order, in case of traditional and charismatic authority it is extended to the power holder personally. In this respect the traditional and the charismatic types share a common feature that clearly distinguish them from the rational-legal type. Again, in case of rational-legal authority, the power holder holds an office in terms of clearly defined rules ; so he enjoys specified powers covering a fixed area that, in normal circumstances, is not liable to change. The incumbent of traditional authority, on the other hand, holds a status that is, no doubt, governed by traditional prescriptions ; but since the traditionally transmitted norms in a society are never codified it is only natural that his area of influence will hardly be as static as in the case of rational-legal authority. As he is not rigidly tied to specified powers he can always claim a legitimate right to the performance of unspecified obligations and services. Thus a sphere of arbitrary free choice is always open to the incumbent of traditional authority—an opportunity inconceivable in case of rational-legal authority. This opportunity widens when charismatic authority is in operation. Since the incumbent of charismatic authority legitimises his power only by virtue of his personal qualities and not by any external force there can virtually be no limit to the

Authority

scope of his authority. He alone will fix his limits and that will be determined only by his own needs and exigencies.

Yet charismatic authority is likely to be far more unstable than either of the other two types of authority. This is because of the fact that while in case of the rational-legal and the traditional type the source and the agent of authority are quite separated from one another, in case of the charismatic type they are identical. When authority rests on the rational-legal legitimacy the incumbent of this authority derives the legitimacy of his power not from himself, but from a legal office which is external to him. This ensures the stability of the rational-legal order since criticism of or opposition against the actions of the person holding this authority does not necessarily mean criticism or rejection of the system as such. Thus criticism of the actions of the incumbent of the office of Prime Minister does not affect the general system of parliamentary democracy in terms of which this incumbent enjoys authority. Similarly, the incumbent of a status in terms of a traditional order may be criticised without opposing the traditional norms that serve as a basis of his legitimacy since here too the incumbent is quite differentiated from the source of legitimacy. But in case of charismatic authority, on the contrary, the incumbent of authority derives his legitimacy from his own personal qualities, that is, from himself. In other words, here the agent and source of authority are identical and "this means that the durability of the regime is conditional on its continuing success : any failure by the agents of the system is a failure of the system itself, because the actions of the leader and his agents are all that the legitimacy of the system rests on."

To combat this problem, argues Max Weber, charismatic authority, once it is established, tends to be institutionalised undergoing profound structural changes in the direction of either the rational-legal or the traditional authority. This process of getting transformed into either the rational-legal or the traditional type is called by Weber the 'routinisation of char-

Political Sociology

isma'. ⁹"In the process of routinisation the charismatic element does not necessarily disappear. It becomes, rather, dissociated from the person of the individual leader and embodied in an objective institutional structure, so that the new holders of authority exercise it at second remove as it were, by virtue of an institutionally legitimised status or office."

Just for this reason Weber treats the three types of authority he has specified as nothing more than ideal types and admits that, in actual practice, authority may very well be found to be a combination of these three types. Hence ¹⁰"in the case of 'legal authority', it is never purely legal. The belief in legality comes to be established and habitual, and this means it is partly traditional. Violation of the tradition may even be fatal to it. Furthermore, it has a charismatic element, at least in the negative sense that persistent and striking lack of success may be sufficient to ruin any government, to undermine its prestige, and to prepare the way for charismatic revolution".

In our modern life which is marked by an attempt at every level to provide an institutional framework to our social and political relations it is but natural that authority in most cases will flow from an office held under the auspices of deliberately framed rules, that is, authority will predominantly be rational-legal. However, at the social level it is still possible to trace the other two types of Weberian authorities in their pure form and this possibility is widened in the context of a society which remains yet unmodernised by the accepted standards. Thus in India's traditional rural society a poor Brahmin with very little resources at his command enjoys an authority by virtue of the traditional caste norms. The spiritual leaders—the 'Gurus'—in India provide a classic case of charismatic authority. They are able to draw thousands of devotees around them—among whom there are not a few politicians and social and economic notables—who submit to their authority without any question just because to the eyes of the latter the former seem to be gifted with some personal qualities which are extraordinary and, in-

deed, rare.

At the political level, specially in the context of modern democratic societies with their emphasis on constitutionalism and rule of law, authority is decidedly rational-legal. A political actor, whether he is a President, a Prime Minister or a party leader, cannot justify his power except with reference to the office he holds which has been created under the purview of some deliberately framed fundamental rules. Authority, in such cases, no doubt, originates from a legal office, but for its smooth maintenance and also for its further consolidation it may often be necessary to draw on charisma or tradition. Taking help of these charisma and tradition may be overt or covert. But, in any case, it is far too unreal to expect authority in modern political society as of a pure and unmixed rational-legal type. To what extent the rational-legal authority is sought to be reinforced by charisma or tradition will, of course, depend on the type of social environment. And this is what makes it necessary to remember that the nature of political authority varies according to the type of social order in which it operates.

An industrial society is unlikely to be very much respectful about the old traditions. Indeed, a social culture characterised by a persistent reverential attitude which is, of course, a prerequisite for the reigning of traditions is greatly affected in an industrial society by its ever-changing rules of market prices and bargaining. Secondly, in an industrial society, emotive elements are largely absent in the social enterprises. An actor usually views his role and also performs it with a predominantly non-emotional and calculating mental frame. Thirdly, in an industrial society, choices and opportunities are always very wide; further, there is a continuous change in the types of these choices and opportunities. And because of this the rate of social mobilisation is very high and this higher rate of social mobilisation adds dynamism to the character of society. Fourthly, industrialisation implies an inter-dependence of the productive enterprises; here growth is achieved through a chain of

Political Sociology

inter-related economic operations. In such a situation the problem of order becomes extremely important since any slight dislocation at any of these inter-related points is likely to upset the whole system. Fifthly, an industrial society thrives on a highly specialised role structure. Complexity of economic operations necessitates specialisation of functions and division of labour in the context of which it is impossible for an actor to try to perform a mix-up of several roles at a time. Again, urbanisation which is the concomitant process of industrialisation ensures speedy communications. With high educational standards and a higher standard of living it is possible for people to make a meaningful use of these communications with the result that the gap between the ruler and the ruled considerably narrows down.

It is these characteristics that will explain why in a developed industrial society authority is predominantly rational-legal and why, further, here there is usually no urgent necessity on the part of this rational-legal authority to look for its strength in the other sources of legitimacy like charisma and tradition. Since in an industrial society the maintenance of order is vitally important for the sake of the ongoing process of inter-related productive operations political authority enjoys an easy acceptability in view of its great utilitarian relevance to the maintenance of order. Further, with communications posing no serious problem, those who obey political authority widely possess a sense of participation in the political process through which legitimacy is further consolidated. Again, the role-differentiated structure of the industrial society prevents political authority from getting too much centralised; here political authority is somewhat forced by the social pattern to accept a diffusive structure of power. But, then, through this process of diffusion of power political authority is able to strengthen its legitimacy. Moreover, as the society is essentially dynamic political authority cannot afford to be very much rigid; in its nature and working it has to be flexible and this flexibility, in

Authority

turn, serves as a powerful safeguard around its legitimacy. But even when in an industrial society the rational-legal authority seeks to be reinforced by the use of charisma or tradition, it cannot hope to depend on them too much since the social culture is not quite congenial to a lavish growth of tradition and charisma. As we have seen, in an industrial society, the social culture is largely shorn of emotive elements. Industrialisation puts a premium on technology and science and not on faith; it calls for routinised economic and political processes and not inspiration. All this negates the possibility of a free use of charisma. Similarly, because of the absence of a persistent reverential attitude in the social culture tradition also cannot be much relied on in an industrial society.

This, however, does not preclude the possibility of the subtle uses of charisma and tradition to buttress up the rational-legal authorities in industrial societies. Thus the extent to which an American President is able to tame a hostile Congress certainly depends not on the magnitude of his power flowing from his constitutional office, but very much on his capacity to make a subtle use of the factor of charisma. And in Britain tradition has always played a vital role in legitimising political authority. This is because in Britain, despite her industrialisation, a reverential attitude persists in her social culture—a phenomenon that may be explained mainly by the geographical factor of the island's insularity.

In a backward rural society the position, however, is just the opposite. Here there are wide gaps in communications, the level of educational attainment is not very high and the general standard of living is relatively low. This engenders a kind of passivism in the social culture that weakens the basis of rational-legal authority. And more and more there is this failure of communications, the more and more authority tends to make use of charisma since charisma to it then becomes a good substitute for communications. With the intensification of this process the incumbent of political authority may some-

Political Sociology

times reach an extreme position where charisma may appear to it to be the only means of getting anything accepted by the governed. And the rural social setting provides an ideal condition for the use of charisma as, owing to the relatively simple character of economic operations, emotive elements in the social culture do not much dry up. Again, unlike an industrial society, a rural society is marked by an absence of fast and continuous changes in roles. Accordingly, a rural society remains basically a static society where old values die hard and where there is always evident a strong attachment for what is past. For all this, in rural society, tradition is likely to cast a kind of influence that is inconceivable in developed industrial societies. In such circumstances, it is only natural that political authority will tend to draw heavily on tradition.

The "best example in this regard may be given from our Indian experience. It is true that in independent India political authority has been based clearly on a rational-legal foundation at every level. After all, we have our Constitution, our statutory laws and administrative rules in the context of which different political offices have been set up and persons holding these offices, no doubt, enjoy their authority in terms of these offices. Yet it cannot be denied that charisma and tradition play a very prominent part in Indian politics. Frequent use of the charismatic factor in the working of all political offices—let alone the office of the chief executive—has been the most striking feature of the Indian political system. The use of charisma in the Nehru era leaving many observers wondering whether Nehru was not India and India was not Nehru is by now a legend to us. Similarly, traditional norms of Indian society, specially those related to caste, have been an important determinant of Indian politics. Political alliances, distribution of political rewards, pattern of political mobility, the question of political leadership and political participation—are all, in some way or other, influenced by traditional caste considerations in India. And all this may be explained by the fact that in India

there has been a strange marriage between a democratic political system and a predominantly rural society that remains yet unmodernised and stagnant because of a total failure to bring in a comprehensive rural revolution.

REFERENCES

1. Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, Prentice-Hall of India (Private) Ltd., New Delhi, 1965, p. 19.
2. Bertrand De Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1957, p. 33.
3. Robert A. Dahl, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
4. Robert E. Dowse & John A. Hughes, *Political Sociology*, John Wiley & Sons, London, 1972, p. 246.
5. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, edited by Talcott Parsons, The Free Press Paperback, New York, 1966, p. 328.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 328.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 328.
8. W. G. Runciman, *Social Science and Political Theory*, Cambridge University Press Paperback, London, 1971, p. 57.
9. Talcott Parsons, Introduction, Max Weber's *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, The Free Press Paperback, 1966, p. 67.
10. Max Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 382.
11. For a fuller discussion on the nature of Indian authority see, Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay, "Authority in the Indian Political System" in Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay (ed.), *Society and Politics in Contemporary India*, Council For Political Studies, Calcutta, 1974, pp. 200-224.

CHAPTER 6

BUREAUCRACY

Authority in modern society, as we have seen, is predominantly rational-legal inhering not in the person of the incumbent, but in the office he occupies. This office as the source of authority makes sense only because it entails a host of functions that call for competence and responsibility. Since it is impossible for the incumbent of authority to stand up alone to the demands of these competence and responsibility he has to take the help of an administrative body of appointed officials which constitutes what is called bureaucracy. In other words, authority is manifest only through the performance of authoritative actions which are necessarily dependent on a collaborative effort and it is in the context of this collaborative effort that one has to understand the relevance of bureaucracy to the operation of authority.

Bureaucracy as an indispensable vehicle of political authority, that is, as an essential part of the state machinery, has been a subject of great interest to political scientists for long. On this question political sociologists, however, stand on a different ground in as far as they "have separated the study of bureaucracy from the study of political organisation in the specific sense of the term, and have included all kinds of other organisations : hospitals, business offices, factories, churches, and labour unions". Thus while political scientists are more interested in knowing how there can be a perfect adjustment between the authoritative part and the bureaucratic part of a government or how bureaucracy can most effectively exercise a purposive control without defying the myriad controls imposed on it by various other agencies of government for the sake of preventing it from overpitching its power, political sociologists, although not sceptical about the significance of

Bureaucracy

these problems, seek to pursue their enquiry on a much wider scale and on issues which are more fundamental.

Since Political Sociology views bureaucracy as a social mechanism necessary for the operation of authority it naturally enquires into the social characteristics that account for the growth of bureaucratisation in society. Once these characteristics are known Political Sociology establishes its claim that bureaucracy is essentially a social group with certain specific attributes that distinguish it from other social groups. Since this social group works within the world of authority and as part of it Political Sociology further seeks to know what role it plays in the exercise of authority and also to what extent it is related to and is regulated by the incumbent of highest authority. To know all this Political Sociology scrutinises its functions and as well looks into what have been called its 'dysfunctions'.

Any discussion on bureaucracy on these lines cannot begin without acknowledging the influence of Max Weber who was the first writer to free the concept of bureaucracy from its erstwhile pejorative connotations and call bureaucratisation an inevitable process by emphasising the indispensability of bureaucracy for the rational attainment of goals of any organisation in modern industrial society. Indeed, modern society with its growing complexities and its ever-expansive structure necessarily gives rise to bureaucratisation. Because such a society cannot afford to thrive on the face-to-face primary group relations. It is large-scale organisations alone that can cope with the complex needs of an expansive society. But large-scale organisations grow on the basis of impersonal or secondary relationships and specialisation of functions.

In other words, modern life is marked by a highly differentiated social structure. Here one notices an extensive differentiation between major types of roles, institutions and interests. Small primary groups embodying an informal and personal order and imbued with a sense of collective participation are

Political Sociology

naturally inadequate to cope with this differentiation. And hence the necessity of large-scale organisations. But in the context of large-scale activities ²“the various institutional units in the society have to compete for resources, manpower, and support for the implementation of their goals and provision of services; and the major social units are faced with many regulative and administrative problems”. All this requires technical expertise and coordinative skill. Further, in a large-scale organisation the group-members perform different functions toward a common goal; accordingly, they enjoy different powers, have different degrees of participation and are given different rights and obligations. Thus the duties and functions of members have to be clearly defined and well-regulated and this requires the development of formal rules and a hierarchical structure for the enforcement of these rules. The complex structure of modern society, therefore, ³“demands formal rules, a formal authority with designated powers, a precise delimitation of interests and benefits, a clear-cut division of labour in which the function of each unit is specified in relation to the functions of all the rest—in a word, a carefully worked-out organisational ‘blueprint’”, that is, bureaucratisation.

Bureaucracy, according to Max Weber, will have the following characteristics : In the first place, there will be fixed areas of official jurisdiction regulated by specific laws or regulations. Thus here an individual occupies an office exercising a clearly defined set of powers and always respecting a sharp segregation of the sphere of office from his private affairs. Secondly, offices are organised in terms of a clear hierarchy of authority so that each lower office is under the control and supervision of a higher one. Thirdly, administration is based on written documents and conducted according to procedures that require special training. Fourthly, recruitment is made on the basis of achievement rather than on ascription. That is, fitness for an office is only judged by technical competence which may be tested by examination or guaranteed by diplomas certifying

technical training or determined by both. Fifthly, the official who is appointed full-time and subject to strict discipline cannot appropriate either the post or the resources which go with it. Lastly, the administrators view their work as a career where promotion is governed by seniority or merit and where a fixed salary is given according to rank.

By virtue of these characteristics bureaucracy, Max Weber believes, works as the most rational and efficient instrument of large-scale administration in our modern society. It is, of course, unjust to dismiss Weber's arguments in favour of an efficient and rational bureaucracy as totally baseless. The bureaucratic organisation, no doubt, presents a very much rational, orderly and objective set-up. Its members enjoy maximum vocational security. They have security of tenure, pensions, gradual increment in their salaries and a well-set principle guiding their promotion. In view of all this a bureaucratic official evinces a kind of devotion to his job that is hardly to be found in case of the members of other social groups. This devotion ensures an efficient, enthusiastic and speedy performance of official duties. Besides, the members have high technical competence which together with the atmosphere of impersonalised relations gives rise to a high degree of professionalism in the backdrop of which the members are expected to be honest and free from corruption in the performance of their functions. Again, since the members are separated from the instruments of production, that is, since they do not own the tools and equipments they use in their jobs they develop the attitude of a typical worker who minds only his official business, never allowing it to be interfered with by his personal non-rational considerations.

All this tends to make the officials highly disciplined and strict conformists. While performing their duties they will strictly follow the rules, putting a premium on precision, will treat every issue in the most objective way and will not try to override their fixed jurisdictions. Again, since the members of

Political Sociology

bureaucracy function for the attainment of certain specific goals within the framework of standing rules and regulations they develop a sense of having a common destiny that somewhat arrests intra-group conflict and aggression. This is what gives them a sense of homogeneity that further contributes to an efficient and speedy performance of their official duties.

Bureaucracy thus can, of course, be a very methodical, orderly, disciplined and efficient order. But it is much true to say that the same features that are considered as accounting for the merits of bureaucracy may very well be the sources of its inadequacy and inefficiency or of what R. K. Merton has called 'the dysfunctions of bureaucracy'. Bureaucracy, indeed, is liable to serious stresses and strains that result from the peculiarities of the bureaucratic structure itself. As we have seen, bureaucracy with its major emphasis on discipline, method and orderly business insists on strict adherence to rules. An official knows that any lapse on his part to follow the rules faithfully may have far-reaching consequences on his career, affecting his promotion and other avenues of ascendancy. In such a situation it may so happen that compliance with rules which is, no doubt, meant to be just a means in the bureaucratic operation is very well transformed into a goal by the bureaucrat. He becomes a prisoner in the so-called cell of sanctified rules, displacing thus the original goals in his bureaucratic job. "Discipline, readily interpreted as conformance with regulations, whatever the situation, is seen not as a measure designed for specific purposes but becomes an immediate value in the life-organisation of the bureaucrat. This emphasis, resulting from the displacement of the original goals, develops into rigidities and an inability to adjust readily. Formalism, even ritualism, ensues with an unchallenged insistence upon punctilious adherence to formalised procedures. This may be exaggerated to the point where primary concern with conformity to the rules interferes with the achievement of the purposes of the organisation, in which case we have the familiar phenomenon of the

technicism or red tape of the official.”

Again, since officials share common interests and possess a sense of homogeneity they may develop a sense of self-pride that may sometimes make them too much defensive about protecting their interests no matter whether thereby they affect the interests of higher authority or of their clientele. Thus at the governmental level bureaucrats with their injured vanity may, through various means, harm the interests of the political part of government. Or, again, injustice meted out to a client from one official may be defended by another official.

Further, too much emphasis on the impersonalised relationship in the bureaucratic order may make an official quite obsessed with the tendency to categorise the issues he deals with and hence averse to the need of giving personal touches to the treatment of individual problems of the clientele. Even when a particular functionary decides to put in some personal touches he may not, in fact, be able to do so since this will be strongly resented by the other members who have generally accepted the impersonal order as unchangeable and may even go to the extent of accusing the former of doing nepotism and favouritism. Thus bureaucrats become rule-adhering machines of the rigid impersonal order and make stereotyped behaviour which is often unsuitable for meeting the exigencies of individual problems of the public who feel wounded and go on nursing the image of hot-headed, unkind and arrogant bureaucrats.

Again, since the bureaucrat is a sharer of authority and a wielder of power he may often tend to think himself to be overpowerful. As a result, in his dealings with his clientele, he may often reveal a domineering attitude that is quite baffling and, indeed, irritating to the latter as it does not fit in with his exact official position. Within the competitive system of private enterprise a client, however, may try to avoid such a situation by stopping his dealings with a particular organisation and moving to another organisation. But when the nature of bureaucratic organisation is monopolistic, as in the case of

Political Sociology

bureaucracy at the level of public government, he cannot move elsewhere and hence is subjected to all the strains. And this is why the problem connected with the stresses and strains of bureaucracy at the public governmental level assumes a special importance.

The only way to counteract these dysfunctions is to evolve a responsive and a responsible bureaucracy. If members of the bureaucratic organisation are made to accept that they have to remain constantly responsive to the changing demands of society and that, further, they cannot abdicate an accountability to forces outside their organisation, then certainly they may be restrained from overdoing their job. But it is impossible to evolve a built-in-mechanism in bureaucracy that can ensure its responsiveness and responsibility. Of course, at the state level, elaborate controls emanating from different agencies have been devised in order to put bureaucracy in check. But when bureaucracy functions at the level of private enterprise it, for obvious reasons, cannot be subjected to such controls. Here the only effective way to combat its dysfunctions is to grow a proper climate of values and force bureaucracy to work strictly in the context of this climate.

This, of course, does not mean that bureaucratic job usually has no value-context. Indeed, each bureaucracy, whether private or public, has its system of values which defines its functions and determines its institutional pattern. But, then, "this value system must by definition be a subvalue system of a higher-order one, since the organisation is always defined as a subsystem of a more comprehensive social system....The value system of the organisation must imply basic acceptance of the more generalised values of the superordinate system". That is to say, each bureaucracy is conditioned by a set of internal values which govern its goal and the type of actions necessary for the attainment of this goal. This value system, of course, is not what is meant to be the appropriate check on bureaucratic dysfunctions. What is really meant is that these values are

Bureaucracy

subject to a set of higher values that permeate the general social system. If the values of this latter type are devised in the right direction and are firmly embedded in the social ethos, then they may serve as a great restraining force over bureaucratic excesses. Thus if a society is thoroughly democratised, that is to say, if the democratic values of justice, welfare and public service are firmly rooted in the social culture, then bureaucracy will not dare to act in a way that offends the very spirit of this social culture and hence will be on its guard to avoid the stresses and strains that it so usually causes. And it is in this context that one has to approach the question of committed bureaucracy. Bureaucracy, that is, will have to be committed not only to its immediate values that condition its goal and pattern of action, but also to the overriding values of the society it serves. And it is on the basis of the character of these overriding values that one has to make an estimate of the efficacy and the extent of availability of adequate checks over bureaucratic dysfunctions.

Modern democratic states, however, have evolved various means for controlling bureaucracy operating at the state level. These controls are both internal and external. The internal control flows from within the bureaucracy, usually taking the form of what is traditionally known as Treasury Control. Generally in modern democratic governments the Department of Finance assumes an overlordship over other departments through its ability to regulate the size, structure and distribution of civil service throughout the governmental set-up by virtue of its monopolised power to issue financial clearance to other departments. But this is hardly enough to temper the so-called bureaucratism since the Finance Department itself may be a victim of bureaucratic rituals and routine. And hence the necessity of external controls.

At the external level, popular control over bureaucracy is sought to be established through controls by the legislature. A vigilant and ever-questioning legislature may expose bureau-

Political Sociology

cratic excesses to the public eye. Again, in the democratic set-up the standing principle with regard to the need of legislative approval to the supply of money to be appropriated by the different departments of government may also serve as an effective instrument to control bureaucracy. Further, some of the scrutinising agencies of the legislature like Public Accounts Committees can also force the bureaucracy to hold its stretching hands.

Above all, bureaucracy is always subject to control by the political executive. The latter, after all, exclusively enjoys—or at least, shares with the legislature, as in the U.S.A.—the power of appointing members of the civil service and this power of appointment, no doubt, contains enough potential for controlling bureaucracy. The amateurish character of the political executive may, of course, be fully utilised by bureaucracy to free itself from these controls. But this varies inversely with the stability the political executive enjoys. The more and more the political executive secures a stable position by virtue of a strong party and popular support, the more and more it is able to subdue bureaucracy by means of the great authority it enjoys in the whole political system.

Again, since in a democracy members of bureaucracy share with other members of society the same treatment by law judiciary also exerts its control over them by subjecting them to the normal legal machinery and procedure in case of administrative corruption or unjust usurpation of authority. Considering that the available means are not sufficient to hold bureaucracy in proper checks, some countries have, of late, introduced the institution of ombudsman to look into the public grievances against maladministration. In India we have the office of Vigilance Commissioner and arrangements are already underway to introduce the institution of Lokpal—the Indian counterpart of ombudsman.

Through these measures modern democratic states try to establish what may be called a representative bureaucracy that

would exercise its power within definite limits. This idea of representative bureaucracy is further reinforced by the growth of certain fundamental democratic values throughout the society that force the bureaucrats to take public service as their paramount goal. But not all political systems present the same picture. And this makes it necessary to classify bureaucracies, corresponding to variations in the political systems, in the following way : (1) representative bureaucracies, (2) party-state bureaucracies, (3) military-dominated bureaucracies, (4) ruler-dominated bureaucracies, and (5) ruling bureaucracies.

Representative bureaucracies, as we have just seen, "are responsible to, and in greater or lesser degree responsive to, the political forces which command the support of the electorate and dominate the political organs of government at a given time. Bureaucratic representativeness is defined, not so much by the extent to which its members constitute a social cross-section of the population which they serve, but rather by the fact that their powers and activities ultimately derive from a process of competitive party politics, and that the policies which they espouse are shaped by and adapted to the popular support which they can muster". Party-state bureaucracy is a type that functions in one-party dominated political systems. Here the potency of bureaucracy as a dominant power group is, to a large extent, affected by the transcendent role of the party which penetrates, controls and dominates the whole of the bureaucratic machinery. In such a system bureaucracy is able to enjoy only that amount of power and authority which is allocated to it by the party and that too is conditioned by the party's needs and interests. Thus, here, as far as the operation of authority is concerned, bureaucracy plays only a secondary role and the problem of bureaucratic dysfunctions is rather irrelevant since, the whole political system being rigidly non-competitive, the clientele have no opportunity to raise questions about their relation vis-à-vis the bureaucratic organ of government. The third type of bureaucracy is to be found in a system

Political Sociology

where the armed forces are the political rulers. Usually military rule emerges in the perspective of an unstable power position in the society and hence the primary objective of the rulers is to quickly legitimise their authority by means of some spectacular actions. Accordingly, bureaucracy in such a set-up is totally oriented to military values. The military virtues of hierarchy and discipline are rigidly enforced throughout the bureaucratic operations and members of bureaucracy are impelled to lay the entire emphasis on the goal-attainment, disregarding the question about the propriety of the means they adopt for this purpose. The ruler-dominated bureaucracy is that type which works as a personal instrument of an autocrat or a dictator who tends to use bureaucracy as a means for consolidating his personal authority and improving his image to the public eye. In such a situation bureaucracy can, of course, be a very powerful group, provided, however, that its powerfulness is necessitated by the personal political needs of the ruler. Again, as bureaucracy here works in terms of a highly personalised relation to the ruler, it may so happen that some members of bureaucracy may exercise great influence because of their personal qualities and also their ability to win the personal confidence of the ruler. The type of ruling bureaucracy represents a system in which bureaucracy itself, in actual practice, largely embodies the ruling element in the political system. Colonial rules often used to manifest the functioning of bureaucracy of this type where the local administration in the colonies enjoyed almost an absolute authority. Similarly, bureaucracy functioning in an Indian State where President's Rule has been imposed somewhat approximates to the type of ruling bureaucracy. Here bureaucracy naturally is extremely powerful and this may tend to develop among the bureaucrats a great pride in their profession which, of course, is associated with a special kind of devotion to their duties. But, since absolute power corrupts absolutely chances are that in such situations bureaucracy will unnecessarily overexercise its power.

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy, in any case, is a very powerful social group. The source of its power, however, is not merely to be explained in terms of the fact that it is an instrument necessary for the operation of authority. True, authority cannot be functionally effective without bureaucracy and while thus concretising this authority bureaucracy naturally has a share of it. In this way, bureaucracy, no doubt, has a secure and a legitimate power base. But, then, resting on this base bureaucracy is able to enhance its power just because of its specific attributes that, indeed, distinguish it from other social groups. One of the most important of these characteristics is what Talcott Parsons calls ⁷“the primacy of orientation to the attainment of a specific goal”. The entire bureaucratic service is conditioned by the guiding objective of attainment of certain specific goals—a feature that is not necessarily present in case of other social groups. Secondly, the striking feature of this process of goal-attainment is that it always produces what is called ‘output’. ⁸“Bureaucracies tend to monopolise outputs. Only bureaucrats enforce laws, policies, or decisions.” In other words, bureaucracy monopolises the function of rule-enforcement and frequently this function of rule-enforcement borders on the area of rule-making. Thirdly, in order to attain its goals, bureaucracy procures the necessary resources strictly on the basis of achievement and not on the basis of ascription—a characteristic that is not a universal feature of other social groups. Fourthly, autonomous, rational and non-personal rules govern its utilisation of these resources. Fifthly, while carrying out its functions, bureaucracy puts a great emphasis on the specialisation of roles and tasks. Sixthly, bureaucracy not only possesses these qualities that distinguish it from other social groups, but also remains very much conscious of its distinctiveness and, indeed, always tries to maintain this distinctiveness by extending its sphere of activities and power, thereby leading to a further bureaucratisation or, if necessary, by a process of debureaucratisation that consists in allowing some of its functions to be taken over

Political Sociology

by other groups. And it is through its ability to make use of bureaucratisation or debureaucratisation that bureaucracy can work as a very important pressure group having considerable bearing on the process of decision-making and also playing a key role in the process of inter-bargaining with other pressure groups. Lastly, since authority cannot flow save through bureaucracy the latter has the unique attribute of being the major source of information about the pattern of actions and orientations of authority. That is to say, bureaucracy has a great role in the process of communications which, in the political context, assumes added importance.

Since bureaucracy is a powerful social group monopolising the function of rule-enforcement and sometimes also a participant in the process of rule-making it is of great interest to a political sociologist as it gives him one of the necessary clues for understanding how a society is governed. That is why, Political Sociology does not stop at knowing the social environment suitable for the growth of bureaucratisation, the structural characteristics and the functions of bureaucracy; it further enquires into the social composition of bureaucracy as the character of this composition reveals what kind of people bureaucracy represents, thereby giving some indication about the pattern of distribution of power in a society. Since recruitment to bureaucracy is generally based on merit that is evaluated in most cases by a selection made through competitive examinations almost in every society bureaucracy reveals a preponderance of higher social class membership. In France over 70 per cent of civil servants come from the upper and middle classes, in Britain two-thirds of the higher civil servants are found to be of upper or middle class origin and the position is not much different in West Germany. In India too civil service is decidedly the occupation of the upper and middle class since the majority of the people are illiterate and higher education being a costly affair is hardly attainable by the poor majority. All this tends to support the validity of the basic hypothesis of

Bureaucracy

Political Sociology that power in a society is always unevenly distributed.

REFERENCES

1. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man*, Arnold-Heinemann India, 1973, p. 36.
2. S. N. Eisenstadt, "Bureaucracy, Bureaucratisation, and Debureaucratisation" in A. Etzioni (ed.), *A Sociological Reader on Complex Organisations*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969, p. 305.
3. R. M. Maciver & C. H. Page, *Society, An Introductory Analysis*, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1959, p. 232.
4. R. K. Merton, "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality" in A. Etzioni (ed.), *A Sociological Reader on Complex Organisations*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969, pp. 51-52.
5. Talcott Parsons, "Suggestions for a Sociological Approach to Theory of Organisations" in A. Etzioni (ed.), *A Sociological Reader On Complex Organisations*, pp. 35-36.
6. Merle Fainsod, "Bureaucracy and Modernisation : The Russian and Soviet Case" in J. La Palombara (ed.), *Bureaucracy and Political Development*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1963, p. 235.
7. Talcott Parsons, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
8. G. A. Almond & G. B. Powell, *Comparative Politics, A Developmental Approach*, Amerind Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1972, p. 153.

CHAPTER 7

POLITICAL CULTURE

When authority operates in the context of a political system the problem of its continuing to enjoy its legitimacy assumes added dimensions since the area of its operation is much wider and the issues involved are far too many and quite complex. One of the subtle ways to efficiently negotiate this problem is to grow an emotional and attitudinal environment congenial to the smooth working of political authority. When this emotional and attitudinal environment becomes a perceptible and a permanent feature of a political system serving thus as an important means of denoting the character of the latter and also of distinguishing it from other political systems we call it political culture. In the growth of this political culture the political authority, of course, bears a hand. But that does not mean that political culture is entirely a deliberate creation. Indeed, much of political culture may not always be consciously held; it may grow implicitly under the influence of too many factors not lying within the jurisdiction of the political authority. Viewed in this light, political culture stands clearly differentiated from ideology, belying thus the thesis held by some that "the dividing line between ideology and political culture is a thin one".

Ideology is, to a large extent, pre-meditated and is, usually, proclaimed overtly by political authority. Since it is thus mostly a matter of deliberate creation, unlike political culture, it is thoroughly explicit, coherent and consistent. And, because of these qualities, it is more easily discernible while political culture flowing from multiple sources and subtly underlying the individual or group relationship with the political system is not so easily identifiable. Again, "the ideology provides an inflexible image of political life, closed to conflicting informa-

Political Culture

tion, and offers a specific explanation and code of political conduct for most situations". But political culture, much as it embodies an element of spontaneity, does not represent such a tightly fixed order. Thus while the ideological aspect of a political system does not frequently change its political cultural aspect does not remain constant necessitating continuous readjustments in the political structure in the perspective of changes in the cultural environment in which it is set to work. Ideology, further, is always action-oriented. That is to say, ideology is not simply held or preached ; it necessarily implies actions adopted by its adherents for its realisation. Hence the task of identifying ideology is never complete unless one takes note of the actions in terms of which it thrives. Political culture, on the contrary, is not necessarily action-oriented. It implies only ideas and beliefs about political actions and not the actions as such. ³"It refers not to what is happening in the world of politics, but what people believe about those happenings. And these beliefs can be of several kinds : they can be empirical beliefs about what the actual state of political life is ; they can be beliefs as to the goals or values that ought to be pursued in political life ; and these beliefs may have an important expressive or emotional dimension."

Although the concept of political culture is taken to be a unique contribution of Political Sociology it would be fair to admit that the subjective aspect of politics which is what constitutes the core of political culture has for long been a matter of great interest to political scientists. Political scientists have frequently referred to national character as one of the important variables of a nation's politics. This, however, has led some to argue that Political Sociology can hardly claim to have introduced anything new through its concept of political culture since "much of what political sociologists are doing is little more than an attempt to explain systematically what an older generation had in mind when they spoke of national character". But this argument, indeed, suffers from an overstatement. The

Political Sociology

concept of national character, no doubt, suffers from a kind of vagueness and ambiguity from which the idea of political culture is relatively free. Besides, it is impossible to subject national character to an empirical investigation and hence it is hardly fruitful to use national character as an objective criterion for estimating the characteristics of a political system. Political culture, on the contrary, being essentially an over-all distribution of citizens' orientations to political objects may, of course, be subjected to empirical investigation as it is possible here to enquire fruitfully what kinds of orientations are held by which people towards what kinds of political objects. But to know more about it let us look closer at the character and content of political culture.

Political culture is composed of attitudes and orientations which people in a given society develop toward objects within their political system. These orientations may have three distinct dimensions which are cognitive, affective and evaluative. The cognitive orientations imply the knowledge people have about objects within their political system, the affective orientations refer to their feelings about them—feelings either of attachment and involvement or of rejection—and the evaluative orientations indicate their judgments on them involving the use of values, information and feelings. The objects toward which these orientations are directed are the following : First, the political system as a whole. People have knowledge of, feelings about and judgments on the political system and it is these orientations that condition the development of national identity. To develop these orientations people must not only be physically and legally members of a political system but as well be psychologically members of that system. Another object of the cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations is the input process of the political system through which the demands made by society flow to the political system for their conversion into authoritative policies by means of the activities of political parties, pressure groups and the media of mass communication.

Political Culture

The third object is the output process that involves the work of bureaucracy, courts and other political institutions concerned with applying and enforcing authoritative decisions. Fourthly, an individual's orientations are also directed toward his own self. As he plays a role in the political system he certainly has knowledge of, attachment to, and also his own evaluation of this role.

It is by taking into account the three-dimensional orientations—cognitive, affective and evaluative—with regard to these four objects that one may know the political culture of a society. The nature and extent of these orientations, however, may vary from society to society and this is what leads Almond and Verba⁵ to classify political culture into parochial, subject and participant. The central characteristic of parochial political culture that differentiates it from the subject and the participant types is that in it individuals have no cognition of the political system as such and, as a result, they do not also have any affective and evaluative orientations toward the political system. Here the individual is parochial in as far as he is only involved in his family or, at best, in his community and least concerned with the central institutions of the political system. For the satisfaction of his wants he looks only to his family or community or perhaps depends on his own efforts. Such a type of political culture is rarely to be found in modern industrial societies; its ideal setting is the traditional society where there are no specialised political roles because of the generally undifferentiated role structure of the society. Thus in India's traditional rural society one is likely to come across people who, much as they are unaware of the Indian political system, develop their orientations only in relation to the local actors like a village priest who fulfils a combination of several types of roles at a time. The subject political culture is one in which there is a high frequency of orientations to the political system as a whole and also to the output process, but where cognitive orientations or, at least, affective and evaluative orien-

Political Sociology

tations to the input structure and also toward the self as political actor are extremely low. Here the individual's position "is essentially a passive one. He sees no possibility of influencing the system as it stands, and acquiesces by accepting as authoritative and unchallengeable the decisions of office-holders. He interprets his role as one in which he must accept the system as it is, not try to change it". Subject political culture is most prominent in the East European states and also in many of the newly independent states of Asia and Africa. In a participant political culture, on the contrary, the individual is seen, and sees himself, as an active participant in the political process. Here his cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations are all very high with regard to the political system as a whole, to its input and output structures and also to the self as a political actor. Participant political culture is clearly noticeable in the British, American and Scandinavian political systems.

These three types of political culture are, however, only the ideal types ; none of them can be found in its pure form in any society since all the individuals within a political system cannot be expected to be oriented in the same way and to the same extent. Accordingly, Almond and Verba list out the following mixed types of political culture : (1) the parochial-subject political culture, (2) the subject-participant political culture, (3) the parochial-participant political culture and, lastly, (4) the civic culture. In parochial-subject culture an individual has knowledge about a variety of governmental roles although he is mostly unaware of the ways in which they can influence the political system. Further, in this cultural system the sense of self as a political force is very much vague and undeveloped and the input structure of the society is relatively poorly defined. The subject-participant type is represented by a society where some of the citizens are very much politically aware and also active and the rest are relatively passive. The former are naturally found to develop positive orientations to all types of political objects. Here the average citizen knows that he must

Political Culture

be active and be a participant, but is given, in fact, little opportunity for sharing in decisions. In the parochial-participant type the input institutions are relatively local like tribal or caste associations although the national output institutions are quite well developed. But, in any case, both the input and the output institutions are so much under the pressure of parochial interests that their performance as national participatory organs is greatly affected. The civic culture combines all the characteristics of the three ideal types of political culture. It represents a synthesis of directive and acquiescent, participant and passive attitudes. Here the subject orientations and the participant orientations are equally strong. The former allow the elites to function with sufficient initiative and freedom while the latter force those elites to remain subject to popular preferences. According to Almond and Verba, Great Britain and the United States reveal the closest approximation to this civic culture.

To say that a society's political culture will invariably be of a mixed type is perhaps not to give enough indication of the possibility that in a society different groups of people may have different types of orientations towards the political objects. When these different group orientations—which may or may not give rise to an integrated and coherent culture—are clearly distinguishable from one another we call them political subcultures. Political subcultures may grow on the basis of region, religion, social class, caste, language, generation, occupation and the like. These subcultures sometimes play a very significant role and in case of some nations it is impossible to understand the character of a political system without a thorough knowledge of these subcultures. In India, for instance, the subcultural differences on the basis of language, religion and caste have immense relevance to the working of the political system. Subcultures, however, are not necessarily divisive. Usually, a subculture does not question the major structural arrangements of a society, but differs only on certain

Political Sociology

specific issues related to authoritative decisions. This, naturally, makes no serious problem for the operators of the political system who can make necessary readjustments by means of value reallocations. But when a political subculture challenges the basic structural arrangements of a society the stability of the political system is threatened which impels the political authority to use force for quailing this situation and that, obviously, generates serious tensions within the political system. In India the language subcultural groups have several times in the past been found to engender such a situation. Furthermore, it may also happen that the officially dominant political culture of a society is, in fact, a subculture. Thus in Ethiopia the general culture of a particular ethnic community, the Amhara, dominates the whole of society and politics.

Again, within a political culture one often notices a particular kind of subculture which is styled by Almond and Verba as the 'role culture'. In the more complex political system there are various specialised structures of roles like bureaucracy, military, political executive, party, interest group, media of communication, etc. These different specialised roles may represent different political subcultures, giving a heterogeneous character to the political culture of the system. This heterogeneity, in fact, results from two sources. In the first place, the elites who perform these roles may be recruited from particular political subcultures. Secondly, the process of their induction and socialisation into these roles may give rise to different values, loyalties and cognitive orientations. Since these elites play a vital role in the political process the kinds of cultural differences they represent may have a great impact on the performance of the political system. Thus in France and Germany the bureaucratic and military elites are generally drawn from the aristocratic and authoritarian subcultures and the process of role socialisation which they undergo reinforces their authoritarian tendencies and thus works against the growth of a homogeneous participant political culture in those countries.

Political Culture

In a sense, political culture itself is a subculture as it is nothing but an integral part of the more general culture of the society. The set of political beliefs and attitudes constituting the political culture is nothing "but the top of an iceberg of more general feelings and attitudes—an iceberg of culture built into the personalities of citizens by all they have learnt about their social world and their collective awareness of its past". And the latter plays a major role in the shaping of the former. Hence to study the political culture of a society one has to take due note of the general cultural pattern as indicated by the established general beliefs touching on the questions like man's attitude to nature, environment and his fellow-men, his understanding of human nature and his general orientations toward activity and activism. Thus in a culture characterised by a predominant fatalism people are likely to provide a resigned submission to government. The political culture of pre-revolutionary Mexico and, of course, of India may, indeed, be explained in this way. Again, in France and Ethiopia, the social culture revealing a great deal of interpersonal distrust accounts for a widespread popular distrust of government. In Britain, on the other hand, the accommodative personal relationships, to a large extent, explain the steady flow of allegiance to government.

Although political culture is thus to be studied in the context of the general cultural pattern of a society it is necessary to separate political culture from the general culture because of the fact that the relation between the two is not always that of complementarity but may very well be one of antagonism. "It may be that political beliefs are sharply discontinuous from or in some way inconsistent with other beliefs. One can conceive of a society in which cynicism is reserved for politics but does not pervade other social interactions. A more usual situation would be one in which the formal values stressed in the political realm were not consistent with those stressed in other areas of social life." India provides a very good illustra-

Political Sociology

tion on this point. In India the political values growing in the context of liberal democratic institutions are sharply different from the general cultural orientation developed for long in the context of India's traditional rural society, causing much strain to the political system. Again, not only general culture conditions political culture but the latter also may influence the former. Thus the political beliefs generated by a democratic political system may often go beyond political boundaries and pervade the wider sphere of social life and thereby tend to democratise the social process.

Political culture is a product of the history of both the political system and the individual members of the system and is thus rooted equally in both public events and private experiences. The idea of political culture, therefore, represents an effort to study the total political system without disregarding the peculiarities of individual psychology. In this way it attempts at a synthesis between psychology and sociology and thus reaps the benefits of both microanalysis and macroanalysis. By studying political culture thus by means of individual interviews and responses and case studies of individual actions, on the one hand, and by means of aggregate statistics and group behaviour pattern studies, on the other, we come to know about the totality of individual orientations that condition the performance of the political system and also about how this system impinges on the lives of individuals. Again, the study of political culture is useful for knowing what are the most appropriate means for bringing about progressive political changes in a society. Moreover, the study of political culture enables us to understand why broadly similar political phenomena across nations produce dissimilar results, giving us thus a very useful criterion for comparing the different political systems of the world.

The greatest importance of the study of political culture, however, lies in the fact that by means of it we may know whether the members of a political system have been able to

Political Culture

arrive at a consensus that ensures the stability of the system. When members of a political system mostly share certain political beliefs and values, that is, when the political culture of a society assumes a coherent and a fairly homogeneous shape all it means is that the members of the system have, among themselves, arrived at certain agreements—agreements which may be either on procedures or on goals. The former type of agreement may be called the procedural consensus and the latter, the objectival consensus. Thus members of a political system may all agree with regard to the necessity of maintaining a liberal democratic system where we have an instance of the objectival consensus or they may have disagreements on the question about the maintenance of the status quo, but may all agree on the desirability of adopting the parliamentary path for bringing about a positive change in the social and political structure—a situation giving an example of the procedural consensus. In any case, this consensus—whether objectival or procedural—greatly contributes toward securing order and stability in the political system. Where this consensus is weak the political system is fraught with constant disorder and may even be threatened by revolution.

The growth of this consensus which is highly important for the working of a democratic political system is intimately connected with the question about the degree of congruence between the political structure and the political culture. The higher is the level of this congruence the stronger would be the foundation of the consensus. “In general, a parochial, subject, or participant culture would be most congruent with, respectively, a traditional political structure, a centralised authoritarian structure, and a democratic political structure. A parochial political culture that was congruent with its structure would have a high rate of cognitive orientations and high rates of positive, affective and evaluative orientations to the diffuse structures of the tribal or village community. A subject political culture congruent with its system would have a high rate

Political Sociology

of cognition and high positive rates of the other two types of orientation to the specialised political system as a whole, and to its administrative or output aspects; while the congruent participant culture would be characterised by high and positive rates of orientation to all four classes of political objects."

An important aspect of this congruent participant culture is a high level of interpersonal trust that facilitates political cooperation and political involvement without which democratic politics is not possible. The British political culture is characterised by a widespread interpersonal trust whereas the political cultures of Italy, Mexico and Ethiopia reveal a great amount of distrust and suspicion in social relations. ¹⁰"Unless individuals trust their political opponents they are going to be rather unwilling to turn over government power to those opponents. Individuals will engage in peaceful competition with those of opposing political views and allow the alteration of power among competing elites—a requisite of a democratic political system—only if the danger of such competition and alteration of power is not too great. And one characteristic that would limit the felt danger of such an alteration would be a belief in the fundamental trustworthiness of those involved in politics and the feeling that they are members of the 'same community'." The greater is the amount of this interpersonal trust and confidence the stronger are the ties of horizontal integration of the members of a political system that ensures the stability of the system by infusing among the people a sense of pride in the political system and by enabling them to maintain a high level of civility in their political intercourse. Thus the question of trust becomes an important determinant of the style of political activity. When political culture is imbued with a fundamental faith that it is possible to trust and work cordially with fellow political actors it is natural that the basic democratic norms of negotiation, compromise and peaceably coming to terms will be duly respected, shielding thus the democratic system from disorder and violent change.

Political Culture

An equally important aspect is the people's subjective sense of political competence. This sense of political competence is measurable by the extent to which a citizen feels that he can influence and participate in the decision-making process. This subjective competence, however, should be distinguished from the actual political competence which is not necessarily an integral part of the former. Thus a citizen may not actually participate significantly in the decision-making process although he may very much believe that he can do so. Yet this subjective sense of political competence will give a citizen a great deal of satisfaction with his role as a participant in the political process and make him favourably oriented to the output of the political system. This sense of political competence, on its part, is usually conditioned by various socio-economic variables like the level of educational attainment, occupation and the sex. The more education an individual has, the more likely he is to consider himself capable of influencing the decision-making process. Similarly, the sense of political competence is often found to be relatively higher in case of male members of society and also in case of persons holding higher-status occupations. As Almond and Verba report : "whether or not one believes himself capable of influencing a local or national regulation depends a lot on who he is within his own country. If he has more education, higher status, or is male, he is clearly more likely to consider himself competent".

In the development of a congruent political culture symbols often play an important role. National flag and national anthem, old institutions like monarchy in Britain, political rituals like ceremonial opening of parliament, religious rituals like coronation ceremonies as in Britain, social rituals like observance of different martyrs' days as in India—these and many other symbols are constantly made use of to evoke people's emotional attachment to and reverence for the political system. Even symbols clearly out of date and not actually fitting in with the temper of contemporary society are very much relied on, if

Political Sociology

they only have a bearing on the question about people's attachment to the political system. Thus in Britain some of the traditional procedures of parliament which, in fact, have no utilitarian value are zealously observed just because through them people's attitude is well oriented in the values of parliamentary democracy. In the newly independent territories where the problem of congruence is naturally very urgent symbols are deliberately created and cleverly manipulated to produce an emotional environment favourable for the smooth operation of the political system.

But even when a society reaches an optimum level of congruence between its political culture and political structure it is far too unrealistic to expect that it will have a single uniform political culture. Indeed, every society reveals a fundamental distinction between the culture of the rulers or power holders and that of the masses, no matter whether the latter are merely parochial subjects or participating citizens. Those who wield power and regulate the decision-making process naturally develop political attitudes and beliefs different from those of the people who are at the receiving end. Thus every political system is characterised by two distinct political cultures—the elite culture and the mass culture; and political systems can be classified according to the character of the relationship between the two. The higher is the congruence between these two cultures, the greater is the homogeneity of the political culture that ensures the stability of the system.

The relation between the elite culture and the mass culture is of crucial importance in a democratic system. Since democracy essentially thrives on consensus it cannot but rely heavily on a participatory political culture which, of course, cannot properly flourish in an atmosphere of antagonism between the elite culture and the mass culture. In a democracy the elites usually try to combat this problem by subjecting themselves along with the non-elites to a democratic myth that ordinary citizens ought to participate in politics and that they

Political Culture

are, in fact, influential. Myths, however, it must be kept in mind, are always by nature half-truths and distortions. That is to say, the point is that by submitting themselves to this democratic myth the elites do not really dwarf their power in favour of the mass. All they do is to punctuate their power with a sense of responsiveness. That is, they know that the ordinary citizen is normally inactive, that he will not try to act even when he knows that he has a right to act. But remembering always that he may act, if they do not act responsively they try to anticipate the possible demands of the mass and act accordingly in advance. In other words, the elites¹² "act responsively, not because citizens are actively making demands, but in order to keep them from becoming active" and in this way a fairly high degree of homogeneity between the elite culture and the mass culture is established in a democratic system. The level of this homogeneity, however, is further dependent on the pattern of the process of induction and socialisation into the elite culture and the mass culture. Where recruitment and socialisation into the elite culture is invariably preceded by an induction into a version of the mass culture, as in Britain and Germany, the political system reaches a higher level of homogeneity between the elite culture and the mass culture. On the contrary, where there are two quite separate processes of socialisation in respect of these two cultures, as in India, Ethiopia and Mexico, the degree of homogeneity is bound to be very low.

The homogeneity of political culture also depends on the extent to which there has been a fusion between its traditional and modern elements. Every political culture embodies certain old patterns and values that represent its traditional aspect and stand sharply differentiated from the morass of modern beliefs and attitudes. The relation between this tradition and modernity is not necessarily one of antagonism although in some countries, as in India and Egypt, the distinction between traditional culture and modern culture clearly coincides with the

Political Sociology

division between the elite culture and the mass culture, apparently giving the impression that tradition is antithetic to modernity. While studying the political culture of a society what, therefore, needs to be seen is whether its traditional part retards the process of modernisation or whether it effectively contributes toward sustaining the modern elements. The British political culture provides a classic case of the complementarity between tradition and modernity. Skill in fusing the old and the new and in making the new readily a part of the old has been the most outstanding feature of the British political culture. In Britain ¹³“the majority of attitudes prominent in the culture today can be traced back to traditional, preindustrial English society. Yet this long lineage does not make them incompatible with the activities of a twentieth-century industrial society. The Industrial Revolution resulted in a complete transformation of the economy, but not in a comparable change in the political culture. Some norms of the traditional culture failed to survive, some were adapted, and some have remained important. In this century there appears to have been a resurgence of emphasis upon certain attitudes from preindustrial England, such as welfare and past traditions. The result is a political culture which is neither traditional nor modern, but a mixture.” Similarly, in Japan, political development has followed a process of fusing the old with the new. The traditional Japanese culture contained a very high potential for development and this is what has tremendously helped the process of modernisation in Japan. ¹⁴“The history of the modernisation of Japan...demonstrates in many ways not only the ability of modern institutions and orientations to coexist with traditional ones for very substantial periods of time, but also the manner in which traditional attitudes and practices can be of great positive value to the modernisation process.” According to some observers, this complementary relationship between the traditional culture and modern culture is working well even in a country like India where political culture is marked by a

Political Culture

dominance of traditional elements. Thus, according to Milton Singer, ¹⁵“the traditionalism of Indian civilisation lies.. in its capacity to incorporate innovations into an expanding and changing structure of culture and society. This capacity is reflected in a series of adaptive mechanisms and processes for dealing with the novel, the foreign, the strange”. In the same vein Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph demonstrate how tradition in India is playing a vital role in the democratisation and modernisation of Indian society. Among the many arguments adduced by them in support of their thesis one is that in India ¹⁶“caste has responded to changes in its political and economic environment by transforming itself from below and within. Hierarchy, privilege, and moral parochialism no longer exhaust its secular significance. Caste has become a means to level the old order’s inequalities by helping to destroy its moral basis and social structure. In doing so, caste has helped peasants to represent and rule themselves by attaching them to the ideas, processes, and institutions of political democracy”. All these observations tend to show that the crux of the matter actually lies in the character of the traditional culture itself. If tradition of a society is of such a nature that through it people are imbued with a firm sense of identity, then certainly tradition can provide a very ideal foundation for modernising the society. But if the strength of the traditional order brings in an unusual rigidity around itself so much so that it becomes barren of any adaptive capacity, then, in that case, tradition surely arrests the process of modernisation.

A political culture is not static; it changes as a result of its response to new ideas, industrialisation, the impact of new leaders, population changes and many other factors. Incorporating these changes it continues from generation to generation and the process by which this transmission from generation to generation is made possible is known as political socialisation. Hence a study of political culture is incomplete without a proper understanding of the process of political socialisation.

Political Sociology

REFERENCES

1. Alan R. Ball, *Modern Politics And Government*, Macmillan Papermac Edition, 1971, p. 36.
2. G. A. Almond & G. B. Powell, Jr., *Comparative Politics, A Developmental Approach*, Amerind Publishing Co., New Delhi, 1972, p. 61.
3. Sidney Verba, "Comparative Political Culture" in L. W. Pye & S. Verba (eds.), *Political Culture and Political Development*, Princeton Paperback Edition, 1972, p. 516.
4. Philip Abrams, "The Sociology of Political Life" in T. R. Fyvel (ed.), *The Frontiers of Sociology*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1964, p. 54.
5. G. A. Almond and S. Verba, *The Civic Culture*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1963.
6. M. R. Davies & V. A. Lewis, *Models of Political Systems*, Vikas Publications, New Delhi, 1971, pp. 116-17.
7. Philip Abrams, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
8. Sidney Verba, *op. cit.*, p. 524.
9. G. A. Almond & S. Verba, *The Civic Culture*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1963, p. 21.
10. Sidney Verba, *op. cit.*, p. 536.
11. G. A. Almond & S. Verba, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-13.
12. *Ibid*, p. 487.
13. Richard Rose, "England : A Traditionally Modern Political Culture" in L. W. Pye & S. Verba, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-4.
14. Robert E. Ward, "Japan : The Continuity of Modernisation" in L. W. Pye & S. Verba, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
15. Milton Singer, *When A Great Tradition Modernises*, Vikas Publications, New Delhi, 1972, p. 385.
16. L. I. Rudolph & S. H. Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition*, Orient Longmans Ltd., New Delhi, 1969, p. 19.

CHAPTER 8

POLITICAL SOCIALISATION

While studying a political culture one would naturally like to enquire as to how this political culture comes to be what it is, that is, how do a people develop their political beliefs and attitudes and how, further, this set of beliefs and orientations is continued from one generation to another. The process by which political culture is shaped at the individual level and, at the community level, is passed on from generation to generation is called political socialisation. Indeed, one of the salient features of culture is its inter-generational continuity. The culture of a social group does not die with the extinction of the existing members of the group. It continues on the strength of a willingness on the part of the new members of the group to embrace the ideas and beliefs comprising this culture. This willingness, however, is not a matter of rational choice on the part of the individuals, but is rather a matter of learned behaviour. This learning process involving an internalisation of the existing cultural pattern is called socialisation and whenever this process has clearly a political context it is known as political socialisation.

Yet socialisation ought to be distinguished from mere learning. Learning as such may not always have a social relevance. Thus we all learn that the earth moves and the sun does not, but this learning is no part of the process of socialisation since it has no bearing on the social role to be assumed by an individual. Socialisation indicates that part of learning which is relevant to the social life. Further, learning is, by nature, a conscious process that differentiates it from socialisation. "Learning is thought of as something that takes place when there is a conscious effort to convey information. But our induction into many roles is by no means a conscious process. The

Political Sociology

young child is not explicitly taught the social obligations attached to his gender, but...acquires them in the ordinary course of interaction with his family group." And what is true of socialisation is also true of the process of political socialisation. Political socialisation is, of course, a matter of learned behaviour, but not necessarily a conscious process.

Political socialisation shapes and transmits a nation's political culture. Or, perhaps, it would be more appropriate to say that it maintains, transforms and, sometimes, creates the political culture of a people. It maintains a political culture by successfully transmitting it from an old generation to a new one. The task of this maintenance naturally receives much importance under stable conditions. But stable conditions are rather an infrequent phenomenon in the modern world where many nations are often found to be struggling for transforming the old order and erecting new political structures with new social arrangements. And this is where we come across the transforming role of political socialisation. Again, sometimes, a nation—and this applies specially to the newly independent nations of Asia and Africa—may try to found a completely new political order for which a new political culture has to be created. The creating task of political socialisation looms large in such a case. Which of these three roles of political socialisation—maintaining, transforming and creating political culture—would receive greater importance would, however, depend on a number of factors like a country's historical development, the type of social and international environment, the character of the existing traditional outlook towards the political life and also the goals and means of leaders and citizens. In any case, these three tasks of political socialisation are, by no means, mutually exclusive; they rather represent a continuum. Actually, the process of political socialisation in every society involves a combination of these three tasks of maintaining, transforming and creating political culture.

Political socialisation, however, is not a process confined to

Political Socialisation

the early years of one's life, but one that is continued throughout the life span of an individual. Political beliefs and attitudes developed in the early part of life may undergo continuous changes as an individual goes through his varied social experiences. A docile attitude to government developed in the context of one's family environment may later on be replaced by a hostile attitude developed in the subsequent part of one's life under the influence of, say, new friends, educational pattern, job experiences or even under the impact of some extraordinary national events. Indeed, the socialisation of a child is bound to be an "incomplete socialisation" on the basis of which he can hardly be expected to successfully cope with all he encounters later as an adult. There are several reasons that may account for the inevitability of this incomplete socialisation. Firstly, the rapidity of technological and social change makes it impossible to anticipate what exactly would be the future; hence it is not possible to socialise the child sufficiently to make him absolutely fit for this uncertain future. Secondly, modern society is highly pluralistic and varied, giving rise to too many social roles and experiences which cannot be fully foreseen by the agencies socialising the child. Thirdly, instances of geographical and social mobility in adult life may tend to wipe off much of the effects of early socialisation. Fourthly, the agencies socialising the child are highly specialised and more restricted in their knowledge of the world, causing inevitably an incomplete socialisation of the child. All this, however, makes it imperative to examine the inter-relationship between the different agencies socialising an individual at different junctures of his life, to see whether the different agencies complement each other or whether the relation between them is always one of conflict. The fewer are the instances of this conflict, the more stable will be the political system.

Political socialisation may assume either of these two forms : direct or manifest and indirect or latent. Direct or

Political Sociology

manifest political socialisation refers to the process in which the content of the transmitted information, values or feelings is clearly political. Thus an individual, under the influence of his family, teachers or some other agencies learns explicitly about the pattern and functions of the government, the views of a political party or gets convinced of the superiority of a particular political ideology. The objects of his orientations being specifically political, these are instances of direct or manifest political socialisation. On the other hand, an individual as a result of his relationships with parents, teachers or some other agencies may develop an attitude to authority in general. This attitude to authority in general may later on be directed to political authority in particular and thus the orientation with a non-political object is ultimately transformed into a political orientation. This is an instance of indirect or latent political socialisation. Thus latent or indirect political socialisation is the transmission of non-political orientations that ultimately affect political objects.

It would, however, be wrong to think that manifest socialisation is intentional and latent socialisation, unintentional. Actually, manifest and latent political socialisation may both be intentional as well as unintentional. Thus when a school teacher urges his students to be good and law-abiding citizens we have an instance of intentional manifest political socialisation. On the other hand, whenever a child begins to fear the police by watching how a member of his family has been harshly treated by a policeman there occurs an unintentional transmission of political orientations. Again, when a child is taught that a good boy is one who faithfully obeys the adults, we have an instance of intentional latent socialisation. When, further, a child begins to learn the necessity of rules by participating for the first time in children's sports we get an instance of unintentional latent socialisation.

Manifest political socialisation may operate through imitation, anticipatory behaviour, political education or political ex-

Political Socialisation

periences. Imitation being an important way of learning, naturally, is a vital component of political socialisation. Thus a rural migrant to an urban area may deliberately imitate political orientations of the urbanites just because by means of this imitation he may wish to make himself acceptable to his new associates. Or, a child may unconsciously imitate the party preferences of his parents. Again, political socialisation may start through a process of anticipatory behaviour. Thus a student with a political ambition may already begin to prepare himself for political offices even before he reaches the level of legal competence for these offices ; in anticipation of holding an office he may develop mannerisms and styles associated with this office. Similarly, on learning about the rules of citizenship from his teacher, a child may, in anticipation of his future citizenship, start behaving like a good citizen. Political socialisation also comes through direct political education. Instruction in politics is given by the family, the school, the government and other political agencies and also by various groups and organisations. The peculiarity of political socialisation coming through direct political education lies in the fact that here the initiative lies not with the individual who is socialised, but with the agency which is socialising. ³“Most societies have both formal and informal channels for the direct teaching of socially valued political attitudes and behaviour. The range of techniques is immense—a propaganda rally in Nuremberg Square, an initiation ceremony among the Masai in East Africa, the falsification of history in Soviet textbooks, a civics course in Great Britain, the biennial ‘get out the vote’ campaign in the United States, the morning singing of the Marseillaise in the French village school, the political circuses in Conakry, Guinea—are a few of the ways in which societies attempt to ‘communicate approved political values and habits.’” Finally, manifest political socialisation may also result from political experiences. An individual’s political ideas and beliefs are, no doubt, substantially shaped by his observations of and experiences in

Political Sociology

the political process. His ideas mature through his continuous interactions with political personalities, structures and events. What, however, is specially worth-noting is that this form of political socialisation is not deliberately initiated by the socialising agencies and that, further, it operates only in relation to adults rather than to children.

Latent political socialisation may take place through interpersonal transference, apprenticeship and generalisation. Indirect political socialisation, to a large extent, occurs through interpersonal transference which means the transmission to an individual of values and ideas through the influence of other persons. Thus a child growing within an authoritarian family is likely to learn to submit to authority without questions and from this he may develop a docile attitude to governmental authority. On the other hand, democratic or participant family experiences are likely to give rise to democratic orientations to political authority. Apprenticeship indicates the acquisition of skills, habits, behaviours and practices that are ultimately found to be appropriate for political activities. Unlike interpersonal transference, apprenticeship does not involve direct transference of explicit orientations ; it only means the development of skills and insights which an individual may profitably use while he is in the political world. Thus nonpolitical activities here serve as an apprenticeship for future political activities. Thus the role an individual plays within the family, the school or the job may be taken as an apprenticeship for the performance of political roles. Indirect political socialisation may also involve generalising from general social values to political objects. We have noted in the earlier chapter how the lack of an interpersonal trust in France, Ethiopia and Italy make the people there quite cynical about government and politics and how, further, fatalism in India accounts for people's fatalistic resignation to government. All these are instances of indirect political socialisation assuming the form of generalisation.

Although in a stable political system the different agencies

Political Socialisation

of political socialisation mutually complement each other no society, indeed, can claim to have a process of political socialisation totally free from discontinuity. The degree of this discontinuity, however, differs from society to society. In a stable society it is of a lesser magnitude while in an unstable or a transitional society it is more marked. "By 'discontinuity' we mean conditions in which socialisation agencies and experiences do not correctly anticipate the attitudes and behaviour associated with adult political positions and do not prepare the maturing individual for them, as well as situations in which an individual learns one type of political values from some agencies of socialisation and different values from other agents."

The discontinuity of political socialisation emerges out of incongruence and inconsistency. Incongruence between the ideas and beliefs of an individual and the realities and requirements of the political world is more or less noticeable in every society, it being invariably much higher in societies undergoing rapid change. The roots of this incongruence may be found in the process of political socialisation itself since socialisation attempted in the early years of life can, in no case, be so much comprehensive and complete as to fully prepare the child for the far too complex roles in adulthood. Some gaps there must always be between the youthful anticipation and the real world. Inconsistency in the messages communicated by the different agencies of political socialisation is more frequently observed. Thus in India, at the family level, one often hears much talk about the corrupt nature of politics, about the insincerity of political leaders and the failures of government; but individuals undergoing this process of political socialisation within the family learn, at the outer sphere, from school and college curriculum, from the mass media and government agencies, about the greatness of statesmen, about their sacrifices and sincerity and the successes of governmental programmes. This, however, is not a speciality of India, but can be found more or less in every society and in an acute form in changing societies

Political Sociology

—specially the societies moving from a traditional to a modern order. Thus some amount of discontinuity is a distinctive feature of the process of political socialisation everywhere.

There is many a reason for this discontinuity. Firstly, there is clearly a time lag between the period during which much of vital political socialisation takes place and the time when the individual actually assumes the political role. This time lag causes discontinuity as it tends to give rise to incongruity between the ideas learnt in early years and the hard realities of politics an individual comes across much later. Further, during this time gap, lot of things may happen changing the pattern and structure of politics ; in such a case the ideas and beliefs developed prior to this change would naturally be incongruent with the altered political order. Secondly, discontinuity is caused by the fact that the socialising agents are too many and that, further, they widely vary with regard to their nature and structure. The more complex is the society, the greater is the number of these agents. And it is only natural that these myriad agents of socialisation, in the context of their different structure and nature, will try to push the individual in different directions. For instance, political socialisation operating within the close personal and primary relationships of family is likely to be inconsistent with that carried on within the framework of more formal, impersonal relationships of secondary institutions. This gap naturally widens in a society marked by cultural heterogeneity and specialised political institutions. Again, social and geographic mobility is also an important cause of this discontinuity. People moving upwards on the social class ladder tend to acquire political values and attitudes much different from what they developed through the early socialisation process. Similarly, geographic mobility also may bring about a positive change in people's established political orientations. ⁵“Movement from rural to urban areas, migration from one geographic or political region to another, change from one population subgroup to another, and move-

Political Socialisation

ment from one social or economic stratum to another may create discontinuities in political maturation. The rural dweller who moves to an industrial city, the provincial peasant who migrates to the metropolitan centre, and the lower class boy who enters a high status occupation, are confronted with political pressures and cues in these new positions that are not congruent with previous experiences." Lastly, political change may also cause discontinuity in political socialisation. Rapid and profound changes in the structure and process of government may upset all the existing continuities in the socialisation process since all these changes are not always immediately followed by the growth of a political culture congruent with them.

Political socialisation is effected through a variety of agents like the family, peer groups, educational institutions, secondary groups, the mass media and government and party agencies. Among these agents the family stands pre-eminent; it plays a key role in transmitting political culture from one generation to the next. Much of an individual's political personality is shaped at home in the first ten or fifteen years of his life and generally a substantial part of it is found to outlast the influences flowing from other socialising agents in the subsequent years of his life. Intensive researches have revealed that in the United States three-fourths of the offsprings' generation share the same partisan preferences as their parents and this has been so despite the fact that the two generations have been put in quite different socio-economic environments. Family's vital role in the political socialisation process may be explained by several factors. In the first place, family holds a crucial position in the life of the child. For a fairly long period family works as the only agency for meeting the physical and emotional needs of the child. The child needs family's love and approval, he draws from it his material requirements and is also given a status by the family. The child thus becomes very much dependent on his family. As a result, he subscribes readily to the familial political beliefs and attitudes just as he

Political Sociology

readily accepts the parental version of what is right and wrong, what is good and bad, what is proper and improper. Secondly, children have a natural tendency of imitating their parents. Usually, the ideal role model for the daughter is her mother and for the son his father. It is true that the influence of this parental model diminishes as the child grows older and begins drawing new models for himself from the wider social sphere where he then moves about. But the thought of the parental model does never totally disappear from one's memory and it remains very much intact at least in case of persons not gifted with high intelligence and not placed at the higher levels of formal education. Thirdly, members of a family usually live in the same environment. ⁶"All the family is influenced by the same neighbours and neighbourhood, by the same friends (who usually share with the family such social characteristics as class, religion, and ethnicity), and by the same economic forces of the area and of the father's occupation. The family members read the same newspapers, attend to the same radio and TV programmes, listen to the same preacher and other local opinion leaders, gather the same gossip and hear the same stories." All this tends to give a family a marked uniformity of opinion against the background of which children are likely to share the political orientations of their parents. This, of course, does not mean that an individual never abandons the familial political ideas and beliefs or that he never tries to test their validity in terms of his own experiences of society and politics he gathers later in his life. Certainly he does and, thus, changes; but even in the midst of this change some of the prominent features of the parental influence remain with him to the last.

While studying the role of the family in the political socialisation process one should not, however, miss the point that political socialisation operating at this level is likely to be very much conservative in character. One of the striking features of a family is its tendency to preserve and perpetuate traditional practices and ideas. It is just because of this that

Political Socialisation

political socialisation performed through family works as a great impediment against rapid and widespread changes in political orientations and this is why political culture in a society is often found to lag far behind the major social and political changes. It is not an infrequent sight that political institutions of a society are changed substantially, but even in the face of this change families continue passing down political attitudes appropriate to situations prior to this change. In the modern developing societies aiming at dramatic changes in the social and political order this retrograde aspect of political socialisation through family is often noticed.

Besides family, there may be other groups in a society which, like family, are based on primary relationships and yet differ from family in their structure and in the character of their intra-relationships. Childhood play groups, friendship cliques, small work groups, brothers and sisters, married couples are some of the examples of these groups which are known as peer groups. Intercourse among the members of a family, of course, is based on a highly intimate and personal relationship; yet the members of a family do not all enjoy an equal status. The parent-child relationship is always hierarchic and each family contains at least two separate generations. In such conditions members of a family—the child and the parent—naturally cannot claim to enjoy the same status. Peer groups, on the other hand, comprise members of about the same age. Hence peer groups can afford to be non-hierarchic and their members can manage to enjoy an equal status in their relations with each other. This, however, does not mean that peer groups have no leaders; but these leaders are not given rigidly defined roles as in case of families.

Political socialisation through family performs the task of establishing a child's basic political orientations and knowledge. But since adolescence the family influence begins to diminish and the young person longs for becoming a more autonomous human being who can function independently of family guid-

Political Sociology

ance. Political socialisation, however, at this stage, assumes new dimensions since now emerges the problem of interpretation of and adjustment to political changes and also of preparation for participation in specifically political roles. It is the peer groups that look after this aspect of the matter. Peer groups thus supplement the socialising functions of the family by preparing the individual for more specific political experiences. In modern complex societies this supplementation is necessary, for parents are not able to prepare their children successfully for full social and political status and participation in the complex and depersonalised social and political structures of modern societies. Further, as far as the task of political socialisation is concerned, a peer group does not always work in conflict with the family. It may often act as a political reinforcer of familial ideas rather than a resocialiser. In fact, "the more stratified or the more static the society, the less the peer group will probably conflict politically with the family".

The success of a peer group as an important agent of political socialisation is to be accounted for by the easy flow of interactions among its members and also by the emotion-laden personalised relations that it involves. Members of a peer group enjoy free access and exposure to each other. Hence a peer group receives a very high degree of attention from its members that naturally enhances its strength as an agent of political socialisation. Secondly, like the family, a peer group is characterised by highly intimate and emotive intra-relations which also facilitate the task of socialising its members. The extent to which a peer group is able to replace the family as an agent of political socialisation, however, varies with the degree of parental control. In some countries, like France, Germany and Belgium, the family asserts its control over the adolescent for a much longer period while opposite is the case in the U.S.A. and Britain. Hence the importance of peer groups as the agent of political socialisation is greater in the latter than in the former. Again, the extent to which a peer group may act as

Political Socialisation

a political socialiser, no doubt, depends on how far politics happens to interest it. For example, in the U.S.A., youth groups generally are seen to be not much interested in politics. Naturally, this type of peer group in the U.S.A. cannot be expected to be an important agent of political socialisation.

As a person grows older and begins undertaking his formal education, the educational institutions—schools, colleges and universities—start working as another important agent of political socialisation. Schools, in fact, are close rivals to the family as major agents of political socialisation. Indeed, one of the main reasons why modern governments set up schools or help in founding them is that governments find in it an excellent medium through which they can hope to grow values highly congenial for their operation. The schools socialise both directly and indirectly. Direct socialisation takes place when the school curriculum, much as it is invariably imbued with nationalistic values, teaches about a country's past, its heroes and traditions and glorifies the achievements of the state thereby helping the students develop a sense of pride about and a feeling of loyalty to their country and their governmental system. Again, a student becomes politically socialised during his school life not only by what the school curriculum deliberately teaches him, but also by the inferences he derives from his school experiences. That is, latent political socialisation also operates at the school level. Thus a school itself contains a particular pattern of authoritative decision-making to which are subjected all the students who, in the light of this experience, may develop a particular type of attitude to political authority. Similarly, modes of participation in the different matters of the school may also determine the students' orientations to the question of political participation. Educational experiences, however, may sometimes supplant earlier political socialisation done at the family level. This holds good more in case of colleges and universities than schools. College and university education, for some students, may bring in new values and the

Political Sociology

formation of more radical political attitudes. In recent times, in some western countries and, of course, in India, colleges and universities have been found to have fostered among certain students a militant political attitude and a love for confrontation with authorities. The students' role in the French crisis of May, 1968, more recently the swelling American student opposition to the Vietnam War and the emergence of Naxalite Movement at the premises of Presidency College of Calcutta provide some of the illustrations on this point.

Like family, peer groups and the educational institutions, secondary groups also work as an agent of political socialisation. The importance of the secondary group as an agent of political socialisation, however, varies with the nature of societies. The more highly developed and complex a society is, the greater will be the number of secondary groups and the more important role they will play in the process of political socialisation. Generally membership of a secondary group provides a very good apprenticeship for dealing with relationships in the political world. Participation in the secondary group equips one with skill, information and predispositions that are found very useful in the context of political participation. It is possible to identify three types of secondary groups which socialise politically in different ways. Firstly, there may be secondary groups with a distinctly political character. Political parties and political youth groups fall in this category. They are established clearly for the purpose of disseminating political values, mobilising political action and recruiting political leaders. Naturally this type of secondary groups carries on intentional manifest political socialisation. A second type represents those groups which are instituted for non-political purposes, but which are found to carry on political education and mobilisation along with their other activities. A labour union illustrates this type. A labour union, of course, is basically tied to the task of collective bargaining and of looking after the material benefits of its members. But at the same time it is equally

Political Socialisation

concerned with the aim of involving its members in political action and giving them political education. In this way this type also carries on a direct intentional political socialisation. The third type of secondary groups do not have any political character, nor do they ever try to impart political education to their members. But mere participation in their routine affairs gives their members opportunities to develop orientations that have political relevance. Thus a cricket club is not directly an agent of political socialisation, but a process of unintentional latent political socialisation is evident in its activities in as far as its members, while participating in its matters, very much undergo an apprenticeship for participation in the political sphere.

Mass media—radio, television, newspapers, magazines and the like—provide a good deal of political information and often add their own interpretation of the things they inform and so their role in political socialisation cannot be ignored. The great technological advancement in the apparatus of mass media has greatly enhanced their importance in modern times. The importance of mass media as an agent of political socialisation, however, varies with the type of social setting in which they operate. The social setting is relevant because it alone helps in determining which types of mass media will attract a particular type of people. The social setting is also an important determinant of the way in which a person would interpret and react to the performance by the mass media. Again, it is necessary to remember that mass media in most cases are not the actual originator of the messages they transmit. These messages, in fact, originate at the level of governmental officials and political leaders, secondary groups, etc. and the mass media just channelise these messages to the people. Viewed from this angle, mass media, strictly speaking, are not themselves an agent of political socialisation, but only an instrument used by the various agents of political socialisation. Further, the mass media messages go through what Klapper calls a "two-step

Political Sociology

flow". That is, mass media do not generally influence the people directly. The messages they transmit, at the first instance, reach a small number of "opinion leaders" like parents, teachers, community activists, etc. who then retransmit these messages to those over whom they have influence. Lastly, it would be more apt to say that mass media are not the primary socialiser; they rather reinforce the already established orientations. Indeed, in most cases, the messages transmitted by the mass media are meant to support the existing arrangements; they inform and interpret in order to maintain the status quo. This tends to make them more an agent of reinforcement rather than an agent of change. This reinforcement function may also be linked with the attitude of the receiver. People are more likely to favourably react to the media when the messages conveyed by the media are in agreement with their established ideas.

A discussion on the agents of political socialisation cannot be concluded without some reference to the role of government and political parties. An individual's continuous experiences of government through his direct contact with governmental functions and governmental personnel and his direct knowledge of what the government stands and works for is likely either to reinforce his ideas and attitudes acquired through the early political socialisation process or to alter them quite substantially. In some cases government directly intervenes to carry on a process of political indoctrination. This, however, is a clear sign of the lack of stability of the political system and also of the failure of other agents of political socialisation. The political party is an important instrument through which people get a regular opportunity to be involved in political actions of the society. It is by way of this involvement that people are politically socialised by the political party. The political party may either reinforce the established political culture or may bring in significant changes in the pattern of existing political culture. Indeed, when a nation is aiming at radical social and political changes the political party may serve as a very useful

Political Socialisation

agency for effectively disseminating ideas congruent with this change and thus may play a very great role in the process of political socialisation.

We have stressed earlier that the more the agents of political socialisation complement one another, the greater is the stability of the political system. This, however, does not mean that the process of political socialisation will be perfectly homogeneous. Indeed, some amount of disharmony there must always be between the functions of the various agents of political socialisation and this is only natural. Because, political socialisation, after all, is a continuous process. Hence it cannot be expected to be completely static.

REFERENCES

1. Francis G. Castles, *Politics and Social Insight*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1971, pp. 30-31.
2. See Arnold M. Rose, "Incomplete Socialisation" in *Sociology and Social Research XLIV* (1960), pp. 244-50.
3. Richard E. Dawson & Kenneth Prewitt, *Political Socialisation*, Little Brown & Co, Boston, Paperback, Fourth Printing, 1969, p. 76.
4. *Ibid*, p. 81.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
6. Bernard C. Hennessy, "Family Influence on Political Opinions" in T. J. Bellows, S. Erikson and H. R. Winter (eds.), *Political Science : Introductory Essays and Readings*, Duxbury Press, California, 1971, p. 134.
7. *The Peer Group : Introduction*, Roberta S. Sigel (ed.), *Learning About Politics : A Reader In Political Socialisation*, Random House, New York, 1970, p. 413.
8. See Joseph T. Klapper, *The Effects of Mass Communication*, Free Press, New York, 1960.
Klapper's "two-step" and "reinforcement" generalisations about mass media effects are, however, challenged by S. H. Chaffee, L. S. Ward and L. P. Tipton on the basis of their study of schools in five Wisconsin cities.
See Chaffee, Ward and Tipton, "Mass Communication and Political Socialisation" in *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 47 (1970), pp. 647-59.

CHAPTER 9

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation is a necessary ingredient of every political system. Although political power in every society is monopolised by just a few the incumbent of political authority in every system is found to be quite keen on ensuring some amount of political participation by the people. The reason is quite understandable. By involving the many in the matters of the state, political participation fosters stability and order by reinforcing the legitimacy of political authority. A society in which a substantial part of the population is denied any participation whatsoever is likely to be highly explosive. This is why even in modern non-democratic political systems the idea of political participation seems to be well-nurtured. A modern fascist or a modern dictator, notwithstanding whatever power he is free to exercise, will certainly not try to follow a go-it-alone policy ; instead, he will invariably try to cloak his arbitrary decisions with the veil of a mass approval secured through some form of political participation by the people. The idea of this participation, naturally, assumes greater importance in a democratic system which, indeed, demands it. After all, ¹“participation is the principal means by which consent is granted or withdrawn in a democracy and rulers are made accountable to the ruled”. This, however, does not mean that rates of political participation are always very high in modern stable democracies. Indeed, a democracy—no mean by any accepted standard—like the U.S.A. reveals a rather poor rate of political participation in comparison with the corresponding rates in other democracies like Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries. This only suggests that political participation is a much too complex phenomenon liable to be influenced by a variety of variables. Hence it is necessary

Political Participation

to carefully scan the pattern of these variables and their relative impact on the nature and extent of political participation. But, prior to proceeding in that direction, let us first be clear about what we exactly mean by political participation.

Political participation denotes a series of voluntary activities which have a bearing on the political process that involves issues like the selection of rulers and the various aspects of the formation of public policy. To be more specific, these activities, mainly, are ²“(1) voting at the polls, (2) supporting possible pressure groups by being a member of them, (3) personally communicating directly with legislators, (4) participating in political party activity and thus acquiring a claim on legislators and (5) engaging in habitual dissemination of political opinions through word-of-mouth communications to other citizens”. Lester Milbrath brings ³these activities under the following three categories: “gladiatorial activities”, “transitional activities” and “spectator activities”. Gladiators represent that small number of party activists whose active association with political parties keeps them engaged in a series of direct party activities like holding party offices, fighting the elections as party candidates, raising party funds, attending party meetings and joining the party campaigns. Transitional activities include attending party meetings as party supporters or party sympathisers or just as neutral but attentive listeners, making contributions to the party funds and coming in contact of public officials or party personnel. Spectator activities, on the other hand, include voting, influencing others to vote in a particular way, making and joining a political discussion, exposing oneself to political stimuli and wearing a button or showing a sticker. Only about 1 to 3 per cent of the American population are the gladiators, some 60 per cent play spectator roles and about 7 to 9 per cent are engaged in transitional activities which, however, may eventually lift one to the more active position of a gladiator or may take him down further below the level of spectator activities and make him an apathetic who just remains non-plussed about the

Political Sociology

political world around him. About one-third of the American population have been found to be apathetics.

Milbrath's classification tends to show that political participation, basically, is of two types—active and passive. This distinction, actually, is a necessary outcome of the most common fact that political participation in every society has a cost that involves time, energy and resources. Not all people are equally able or even willing to bear these costs and hence all are not direct and active participants in every society. Political participation may further be classified in terms of its purpose as instrumental and expressive. Instrumental political participation is essentially directed to the achievement of concrete goals like securing party victory or the passage of a bill or just a rise in one's status or influence. Expressive political participation, on the other hand, does not aim at the realisation of any concrete goal; it is concerned with some immediate satisfaction or a mere release of feeling. Thus some vote not because they are much interested in the political results flowing from the elections or in any material gain for themselves, but because they just have a feeling of satisfaction in exercising their voting right. In actual practice, however, instrumental participation often gets mixed up with expressive participation. Most of the participants usually take their participation in the light of the outcome to follow from it as well as in terms of its contribution toward the fulfilment of some of their personal feelings. And this is what makes it plain that there cannot be only one, but, indeed, many explanations of political participation. But, before approaching these explanations, that is, before we know why people do participate politically, we should first see why people do not participate, that is, why there are apathetics in a society.

Political apathy in a non-democratic system has a peculiarity of its own in as far as it there often works as a defence mechanism. "It is a type of political passivity, which provides support for the regime but enables the individual to avoid the politicisation of his whole being. As a defence mechanism,

Political Participation

it seeks to preserve in one of the few ways possible some form of individual privacy and autonomy." In a democratic system the position, naturally, is altogether different. In a democracy one usually comes across two types of apathetics. There are those who fail to participate because of a lack of information about and interest in the political world which results from their political indifference and incapacity and also from a lack of the opportunity to participate. This kind of political apathy which is far from deliberate is usually found among the uneducated, the inarticulate, the parochial, the isolated and also among those whose very roles operate only on the basis of a kind of political passivity as is to be found in case of women in societies heavily dominated by men. The second type of political apathy is deliberate. It is to be found among those who decide not to participate politically.

There may be very many reasons why an individual deliberately shuns political involvement. In the first place, it may be due to the fact that political involvement to an individual may appear to be far less rewarding than other kinds of human activity. One may tend to derive higher psychological satisfaction and greater amount of concrete material benefits from one's preoccupation with family, friends and the like than from political involvement. The extent to which political participation will thus be lowly valued by an individual, however, depends on two factors—psychological and social. An individual's mental make-up may be such that he becomes more interested in his primordial biological and psychological needs than in the distant and vague results likely to flow from political involvement. Again, when high rates of economic development coupled with extensive egalitarian measures give an all-too-well look to a society and thus lessen the incidence of social conflict chances are that people will be less interested in politics and pay greater attention to the so-called ephemeral things of their individual and social life.

Secondly, an individual is likely to be disinterested in his

Political Sociology

political participation if he strongly feels that it really makes no sense in as far as it will never be able to change the existing state of things. ⁵“Citizens who are pessimistic about their capacity to influence political events may eschew politics on the ground that what they do won’t matter anyway. Voters sometimes neglect to vote because they feel that one vote won’t change the outcome ; citizens often fail to press their views on public officials because they believe that public officials won’t pay attention to people like themselves.” In other words, the extent of a person’s political participation is very much influenced by his sense of political efficacy. This sense of political efficacy, on its part, is conditioned by a person’s income, social standing, political experience and also by the level of his educational attainment. Sometimes the personality factor is also important in this regard. That is, an individual’s sense of political efficacy may be more an index of the amount of his self-confidence ingrained in his personality.

Thirdly, political apathy may also result from the fact that an individual is too satisfied with the efficiency and efficacy of the political system he belongs to. He may have so great a confidence in the excellence of a political system that he may be led to the belief that the system will go on functioning smoothly and efficiently, no matter whether he is politically involved or not. This explains why voting turn-outs rise high in times of crisis as they did in the U.S.A. in the face of the economic crisis situations of 1896 and 1936 and the international crises of 1916, 1940 and 1952. Political apathy may also be a result of one’s total frustration with the system. An individual may consider the political system so much self-serving, corrupt and incorrigible that he may decide to keep away from politics. Again, sometimes political apathy may be encouraged by an ideological stereotype. The Naxalites in India asked people to abstain from voting since on the basis of their ideology bourgeois elections were without any meaning to the people.

As we have indicated earlier, political participation is a

Political Participation

complex phenomenon that cannot be easily explained. It varies from country to country, from era to era, from one type of people in a society to another. Too many variables thus work behind political participation which, however, may be brought under some distinct categories like (1) the psychological, (2) the social and (3) the political.

Political participation, indeed, tends to meet one's psychological needs of overcoming his loneliness. "Common political beliefs lay the groundwork for sharing equivalent emotions of anger, sympathy, and distress; common interests improve the opportunities for small talk; common activities create bonds of friendship. Politics may offer to the lonely man new opportunities for association with others—the excuse may be politics, the need may be fear of isolation." Thus men participate politically because they detest isolation and want to have the association of others. Again, one of the fundamental psychological traits of man is that he is a curious animal; he wants to understand the meaning of his environment. This pursuit of meaning also serves as an important psychological reason for one's political participation. An individual becomes politically involved because he is keen on deriving meaning from the political environment he is living within. All these, however, are the conscious psychological grounds of political participation. But participation may also be attributed to unconscious psychological elements. For instance, political participation is likely to provide relief to a man's intra-psychic tensions growing mostly at the unconscious level and generated either by a conflict of his impulses or by a conflict between his impulses, on the one hand, and his mental control mechanisms, on the other—the external background of this conflict being provided by either the familial sphere or the social sphere. Political participation may subdue these tensions in two ways. Either it may arrest these tensions by distracting the individual from the sphere of his inner conflict or it may provide some effective channels for expressing this conflict and thereby help

Political Sociology

the individual in easing out his inner tensions. Or, again, political participation, by engaging an individual in political activities, may, in fact, give him a new life style whereby he can get out of the tiring circle of his psychic conflict. Robert Lane notes 'how Andrew Bonar Law, the one-time Prime Minister of Great Britain, plunged into more active political participation—which eventually made him the leader of the Conservative party and also the Prime Minister of the country—as a means of distracting himself from the great pain he had been suffering from on the death of his wife in 1909. Again, men are always psychologically motivated by a kind of power-seeking. It is, indeed, pleasing to a person to feel that he is powerful. This longing for power that, of course, operates at the unconscious level leads people to be politically involved. Moreover, everyone is, in some way or other, a prisoner to his own ego and, therefore, consciously or unconsciously, is after self-esteem. The needs for self-esteem are to a large extent gratified by political participation. The extent to which this variable can work, however, depends on how far political acts are socially valued in a society. For instance, whenever a political act is a deviant act that is socially disapproved it is obvious that participation in such kind of act will hardly meet the needs for one's self-esteem.

An individual's social environment contains diverse elements that have a clear bearing on the nature and extent of his political participation. The most important among these elements are education, occupation, income, sex, age, residence, mobility, religion, race and group influence. In recent times numerous researches have been done in different countries on the potentiality of these social variables in encouraging political participation and the general finding has been that political participation is relatively high in case of the better educated, members of the higher occupation and income groups, male members of the society, settled residents, urban dwellers and members of voluntary associations. The relevance of education

Political Participation

to participation is obvious. Education gives one greater information and expands the horizon of one's interest. The higher is the education, the greater are one's sense of civic duty, political competence, interest and responsibility and also self-confidence and articulateness. Regular participation in the corporate life of educational institutions, further, enables one to develop a skill for political participation. Again, the more educated are likely to be quite capable of transmitting their political interest and knowledge to the next generation. Thus education received by one generation is not only relevant to its own participation, it as well may influence the extent of political participation by the next generation. Education has been found to be a persistent correlate of political participation in countries like the United States, Finland, Mexico, Britain, France and Italy. Yet research results have not been uniformly consistent on this question. Thus G. M. Connelly and H. M. Field have found ⁸that similar levels of educational attainment may lead to different degrees of political participation because of differences in income. J. M. Foskett, on the other hand, has found ⁹that participation differs more in case of persons with the same income but different levels of educational attainment than in case of those with different income but the same educational attainment. In other words, education, no doubt, is an important explanatory variable of political participation, but the magnitude of its influence is liable to be limited by the working of other variables.

People holding higher occupations usually reveal a greater willingness for participation. It is true that people belonging to this category have a higher educational attainment and this, no doubt, gives an important explanation of the high rate of their participation. But, besides education, other variables too are at work. The complex and technical jobs the members of the higher occupations deal with naturally increase their intellectual development and make them more articulate. They are thus able to have a greater understanding of and more informa-

Political Sociology

tion about the political world. In other words, their occupational skill makes them well fitted with a good amount of political skill. Further, there are certain occupations where there is much of in-group interactions among the members who have more or less identical problems. It is this contact that widens the scope of general participation which, in effect, facilitates greater political participation. Thus the professional people, teachers and public servants everywhere are found to have voting rates among the highest in the country. There are, on the other hand, some other types of occupations which provide very little leisure or cause so much anxiety in the sphere of job to the members of the occupation that the latter can hardly afford to be interested in nonpersonal problems. Political involvement in such cases is bound to be low. Thus the manual or clerical workers who usually have to work long regular hours and who have less security in their work cannot be expected to have a high political participation.

Higher income which brings in greater prosperity, more leisure, less anxiety and wider opportunities naturally makes people more active in politics. Thus the higher income groups are found to vote proportionately more frequently than those with lesser income. This, however, does not mean that a rise in income has a uniformly proportionate effect on political participation. As Campbell, Gurin and Miller ¹⁰ have shown, on the basis of their study of the voting pattern of American income groups, any given rate of increase in income from one level to another is likely to bring a smaller rate of increase in turn-out as one ascends the income scale. Although income, at the individual level, is an important correlate of political participation it may not necessarily be so at the national level. That is to say, a country with a very high rate of per capita income may not always reveal a very high degree of political participation.

¹¹“Cross-cultural and cross-state data do not at all support the view that national or state wealth and electoral participation are related in the same way as individual wealth and participa-

Political Participation

tion in the United States and throughout the world.”

Education, occupation and income together constitute a person's status and, therefore, it is quite appropriate to say that high status persons are likely to participate more in politics than the low status people. But the correlation between status and participation may be affected by the variables of sex and age. Extensive data from various countries like the U.S.A., Great Britain, Italy, France, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, Norway and Japan confirm that men participate more than women who are more conservative, less liable to heterodoxy, less well-informed about political issues and public figures, less attentive to the diverse points of view and, therefore, have less interest in politics. Sometimes, women's major preoccupation with home and family may account for their low participation. Above all, women are more submissive to the general culture that usually emphasises moral, dependent and politically less competent images of women which, in effect, reduce their partisanship and sense of political efficacy and, thus, fix for them a less active political role. Marriage, however, makes a difference. Thus, as Lipset ¹²reports, in Stavanger, a city in Norway, it was found in 1957 that, even within a low-voting working class ward, married people voted more than the average. Married people participate more than the single persons because marriage represents a more stable existence, ensures more homogeneous ties in the community and reduces the chances of social and geographic mobility. Again, as the data from the U.S.A., Great Britain and France confirm, middle-aged persons tend to participate more than the too young and the too old. Lack of stability and security in the early age and also the relative inability to confront with a sustained zeal the various conflict situations naturally make the young rather evasive of participation. Similarly, the sense of political efficacy starts dropping sharply at around the age of fiftyfive when a person normally approaches retirement that, marking an end of his active life, saps his self-confidence and thereby affects the rate

Political Sociology

of his participation. On the other hand, life conditions of the middle age, including property ownership, increased family responsibilities, acceptance of group status and more homogeneous social environment, tend to promote greater political participation.

Again, people first coming into a community are likely to have fewer associational ties, less information on community affairs, fewer political contacts and fewer emotional and material stakes in the group tensions that manifest themselves in politics. Hence the longer a person resides in a given community the greater are the chances of his political participation. This, however, holds good more with regard to gladiatorial activities. A newcomer is not normally allowed to hold a public or a party office; he can have them only after he has lived for some time in an area or in a country and thus has given the evidence of a settled residence. Similarly, the city dwellers with their higher educational level and, therefore, with their greater understanding of the political issues, their lesser physical costs of participation, their increased exposure to mass media, their more salient class and ethnic cleavages and their greater penchant for forming voluntary associations are likely to make politics a more significant aspect of their lives than those living in rural areas. Hence urbanites will participate more than the rural folk.

We have just seen that a newcomer to an area is likely to indulge much less in participatory activities. However, not only this residential mobility, but, indeed, mobility of any kind adversely affects political participation in as far as mobility invariably reduces the extent to which an individual will be engaged in different forms of activity. Moreover, mobility is likely to subject an individual to 'cross-pressures'—a phenomenon much emphasised by ¹³Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet—which mean various pressures operating in opposite directions as when the various reference groups exert pressure on an individual in quite conflicting directions. Mobility that in-

Political Participation

creases these pressures puts an individual in rather a painful position of making his choice—painful because the making of this choice may mean for him the giving up of something he very much prizes. In the face of this situation marked by conflict and ambivalence an individual usually escapes by abstaining from participation. It is because of an increase in these cross-pressures at the political level that social mobility—both upward and downward—reduces interest in politics and thus diminishes the rate of political participation.

Religion and race also, sometimes, have perceptible impact on political participation. In the West the Catholic voters have been generally found to participate more in elections involving issues like legalisation of birth control or matters touching the affairs of educational institutions imbued with Catholic beliefs. "In Germany, where the Christian Democratic party attempts to be the spokesman of both Catholicism and Protestantism, whether Catholics or Protestants attend church affects their political participation considerably." The ethnic factor is as well important. The more a society is marked by ethnic rivalry or conflict the greater will be the rate of participation of the conflicting ethnic groups. Again, ethnic participation in politics is increased by the presence of ethnically relevant issues in the national as well as in the foreign policy.

Political participation is not natural; it has, in fact, to be learned. An individual derives an important part of this learning from the members of the group to which he belongs and it is in this way that group membership—specially the membership of voluntary associations—increases a person's political interest and activity whereas isolation makes him politically apathetic. A group influences the political activity of an individual in various ways. It gives him a standard to judge what is right and wrong and thereby enables him to evolve a criterion of his political judgment. It, further, structures his beliefs about social and political environment. The individual also learns about himself from the group : he discovers that he is a leader,

Political Sociology

a good organiser, a friendly person or a responsible citizen; and this tends to increase his sense of political efficacy. Sometimes, a person may identify himself with a group despite the fact that he is not actually recognised as a member of this group. Thus a manual labourer may think himself to be a member of the middle class and may very much imbibe its values although he does not have the education, income or occupation characteristic of the middle class. For such a labourer the middle class becomes a positive reference group that substantially affects the nature and extent of his political participation.

But, if the social environment is important for understanding the character of political participation, so is the political environment. If the political map of a country is too large, if the machineries of political communication do not properly function, if the governmental institutions are enmeshed in highly rigid and complicated rules, people are likely to develop somewhat a feeling of remoteness that seriously affects the rate of their political participation. Again, the more open is the competition for power in a society and the more is this competition based on established and accepted forms of procedure, the greater will be the tendency to participate. People will more take part in elections, if the election rules are simple and the voting arrangements are not unnecessarily cumbersome. The government's effort to encourage and instruct the potential voters is also a factor to count although this kind of effort is more to be found in the newly independent territories like India rather than in the established democracies in the West. The overall governmental performance is also important. People may be so disgusted with the inefficiency of their government that they may detest political participation. This, of course, does not mean that a very good performance by a government always works as a booster to political participation. Overconfidence in the ability of government may sometimes develop a feeling among the people that their participation is not really all that necessary, that government will go on producing excel-

Political Participation

lent results even without their participation. Crisis in national or international politics may, sometimes, sharpen the impulse to participate as it happened in Germany and Austria where voting turn-out reached a peak in 1932-33 in the last elections before the destruction of the democratic system there. Sometimes, just the opposite may also be the case in as far as it has been found that in some instances an unusually grave problem in national politics tends to paralyse the voters; this explains why during war time voting tends to decline rather than to rise.

Of all the political influences on participation the party is surely the most important since it is a very significant vehicle for conveying the wishes of the people to the government. The party draws to itself such a great emotional attachment from the people that for many it acts as a very powerful reference group that keeps them engaged in political activities, in some way or other. The parties also perform a number of important functions that help people in participating politically. They give people political instruction and directly encourage them to participate by constantly supplying them information about the political world and also about the technicalities involved in different forms of participation. One mainly knows through a party what are the central issues in current national politics, how to judge them, who are the candidates in elections, where to find the voters' register, how to search one's name in it, which polling centre one would have to go to and what is the procedure of casting one's vote. In view of these strong links between parties and political participation it looks like a very convincing proposition that in a country marked by the presence of strong, organised parties based on clear-cut ideologies chances of participation are higher although this proposition is not found to be always substantiated by the available data.

The role of parties in political participation cannot be fully estimated without taking due note of the effect of party campaigns. Party campaigns, of course, have a great impact on

Political Sociology

political participation. Even the most apathetics are found, under the influence of campaign, to attend a political meeting or listen to a political speech. Different types of campaigns, however, have different effects. Campaigns may either be impersonal, that is, carried on mainly through the mass media or they may be impersonal but direct like direct mailings and distribution of party literature or they may be fully direct and personal where a party worker or a party leader establishes a face-to-face communication with the people. The impact of this last type of campaign on participation is naturally much greater.

The political variables in respect of participation are, no doubt, important ; but it is apt to remember that, as far as participation is concerned, the same political variables are often found to produce different results and this so happens because the operation of the political variables is very much limited by the psychological and social variables. Identifying these psychological and, specially, the social variables has been one of the chief tasks in modern voting behaviour studies. But the results of these voting behaviour surveys have so far hardly succeeded in building up a general theory of political participation because of the fact that they have mostly revealed a lack of uniformity in the operation of the variables they seek to explore. Yet voting behaviour studies continue to flourish in different research circles and more and more they are being enriched by the application of highly sophisticated methods and techniques. On the basis of their different patterns it is possible to make, after S. J. Eldersveld, ¹⁵a sixfold classification of voting behaviour studies.

Firstly, voting behaviour research may take the form of a hypothesis-testing exploratory study. In such a type of study—a good example of which is Stuart Rice's *Quantitative Methods in Politics*—the researcher just intuitively considers a proposition significant and, confining his enquiry to a specific election situation, collects and orders the voting data in order to see

Political Participation

whether his proposition is true or false. Since such type of survey is initiated by intuitions, since here the enquiry is confined to a specific election situation with no attempt to carry on the exploration over a span of several elections and since, further, here there is no exploration of alternative hypotheses, this type of voting research has very little to contribute to the growth of a theory of voting behaviour.

The single-hypothesis trend study which represents another type is, of course, an improvement over the first type in as far as here the investigator, proceeding with a single proposition or an interpretation of one aspect of voting behaviour, seeks to test its validity over a large span of elections and in many electoral units. Yet it fails to demonstrate a high degree of probability as it never tries to strengthen the validity of its single hypothesis by means of a rigorous exploration of the alternative hypotheses.

The third type is the hypothesis-testing factorial analysis which differs from both the first two types. It proceeds with a definite hypothesis or a set of hypotheses and collects data relevant to these hypotheses. The entire enquiry, however, is kept confined to one or a few election situations in a single community. Thus it differs from the first type in that, unlike the latter, it represents an intensive, sustained and systematic effort. It also differs from the trend study in as far as it is limited to one point in time or one community. E. H. Litchfield's *Voting Behaviour in a Metropolitan Area* and D. Anderson and P. E. Davidson's *Ballots and the Democratic Class* provide examples of this type. Since this type of research does not ignore the necessity of exploring the alternative hypotheses it is likely to be more reliable. Yet studies of this type ¹⁶“are but the beginning of knowledge and in no sense can they be used as a basis for dogmatic assertions concerning voting behaviour. ...They have shown us what we should know, what we can know, and how to know, but also what we do not know”.

Another type is the mass-tabulation case study. It proce-

Political Sociology

eds with no hypothesis or only with some vague one and concentrates on a single electoral unit. Here the investigator studies various aspects of a single electoral unit against the background of one or a short series of elections and tries to collect maximum data from the voting records. Thus J. K. Pollock in his *Voting Behaviour: A Case Study* made an election study of Ann Arbor, Michigan, examining 26,000 voting records in the period from 1924 to 1932. The fact that this type of study involves massive collection of data, no doubt, makes it important. But since it operates with no hypothesis it has practically no value for hypothesis-substantiation. Further, it has only a specific descriptive value for a single community at a particular point of time. In other words, it has only a local application and cannot give rise to any broad generalisations.

Voting behaviour research sometimes takes the form of a comparative statistical survey which aims at scanning the differentials in voting behaviour trends in counties, states or nations. Herbert Tingsten's *Political Behaviour* illustrates this type of research. This type of research, like the mass-tabulation case study, starts with no clearly expressed hypothesis, and, like it too, its value is only particularistic. Generalisations can seldom be derived from it and hence it is of little help in constructing a general theory of voting behaviour.

The last type is what has been called the community dynamics type. Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet's *The People's Choice* clearly comes in this category. This type of study involves mass tabulation and recording; but, at the same time, it advances on the basis of a definite set of inter-related hypotheses. It focuses on the dynamic interaction of various variables, utilising the most advanced measurement and survey techniques. The greatest merit of this type is that it rests on the belief that political behaviour is a total-situation community phenomenon to understand which what is necessary is an analysis of the interaction of many factors. Yet even this type cannot take one very far toward constructing a positive

Political Participation

theory of voting participation since it fails to explain voting participation in a community in definitive terms.

And this is what has led some to challenge the very usefulness of the voting behaviour researches on the basis of the argument that voting behaviour studies can at best help one in making predictions, but cannot provide a correct explanation or diagnosis. According to these critics, it may very well happen that the variables identified by the voting behaviour studies are not always the true indicators. ¹⁷"A man might make his decision for some anomalous and even arbitrary reason and not for the final variable isolated by the patient experimenter." Or even when the correlations are correctly identified by the voting behaviour study it may not result in an accurate explanation since behind the correlates—social, political or psychological—there may operate some other factors which cannot be subjected to empirical enquiry and can only be understood through one's knowledge of history. Thus ¹⁸"there is nothing, in a sense, that needs to be explained about a South Wales miner voting Labour or an executive of General Motors voting Republican. The simplest model of rational self-interest is enough to explain these cases...The question "why?" can still be asked, of course, as it always can indefinitely. But it turns at this point into a historical question about how the Labour Party came to represent the working-class interest. It could be answered by an account of how the 'Lib-Lab' miners' M. P.'s of the early years of this century decided to affiliate with the newly formed Labour Party, how the Conservative Party behaved on the mines question after the First World War, and so on. To ask for a further or deeper psychological explanation would be like calling in an analyst to explain why a child wishes to eat when it is hungry".

It is true that voting behaviour studies cannot provide a final explanation of the voting participation. Yet it cannot be denied that they, after all, establish some important links. These links, no doubt, are extremely important since, by continuously

Political Sociology

verifying these links in different historical conditions, one may finally arrive at some fairly reliable general propositions and it is in the perspective of these propositions alone that one can make an attempt to make a theoretical analysis of the phenomenon of political participation. Moreover, it is, after all, the voting behaviour studies that reveal that there are predominant social components in the political fact of participation, that is, they establish the necessity of approaching politics through social variables and thereby strengthen the rationale of Political Sociology. Lastly, it is through these voting behaviour studies that we may know that all do not equally participate politically because of the fact that resources are not evenly distributed in a society. The voting behaviour studies thus help in substantiating one of the basic premises of Political Sociology.

REFERENCES

1. H. McClosky, "Political Participation" in *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Collier-Macmillan, New York, 1968, Vol. 12, p. 253.
2. J. L. Woodward & E. Roper, "Political Activity of American Citizens" in H. Eulau, S. J. Eldersveld & M. Janowitz (eds.), *Political Behaviour: A Reader in Theory and Research*, Amerind Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1972, p. 133.
3. L. Milbrath, *Political Participation*, Rand McNally, Chicago, 1965.
4. T. J. Bellows, S. Erikson & H. R. Winter (eds.), *Political Science: Introductory Essays and Readings*, Duxbury Press, Belmont, California, 1971, p. 123.
5. R. A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, Prentice-Hall of India (Pvt.) Ltd., New Delhi, 1965, p. 61.
6. R. E. Lane, *Political Life*, The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1961, p. 108.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 118, Footnote.
8. G. M. Connelly & H. M. Field, "The Non-Voter—Who He is, What He Thinks", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 8 (1944), p. 179.
9. J. M. Foskett, "Social Structure and Social Participation", *American Sociological Review*, 20 (1955), p. 434.
10. A. Campbell, G. Gurin & W. E. Miller, *The Voter Decides*, Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson, 1954.
11. R. E. Lane, *op. cit.*, p. 329.
12. S. M. Lipset, *Political Man*, Arnold-Heinemann India, New Delhi, 1973, p. 212, Footnote.
13. P. F. Lazarsfeld, B. Berelson & H. Gaudet, *The People's Choice*, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1944.

Political Participation

14. S. M. Lipset, *op. cit.*, p. 196, Footnote.
15. S. J. Eldersveld, "Theory and Method in Voting Behaviour Research" in H. Eulau, S. J. Eldersveld & M. Janowitz (eds.), *Political Behaviour : A Reader in Theory and Research*, Amerind Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1972, pp. 267-74.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
17. W. G. Runciman, *Social Science and Political Theory*, Cambridge University Press, 1971, p. 95
18. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

CHAPTER 10

POLITICAL PARTIES AND PRESSURE GROUPS

The social life is made up of many organised groups some of which enjoy a special attention in Political Sociology because of their direct bearing on the political process. Political parties and pressure groups fall in this category. Since Political Sociology views politics as essentially a matter of conflict and its settlement it is only natural that political parties being an important instrument for canalising, disciplining and harmonising conflicting interests in a society will be a subject of abiding concern to a political sociologist. Besides, the operation of political power and authority—which happens to be the central theme around which has grown much of the content of Political Sociology—cannot be fully understood without a proper assessment of the role of the political party that is, indeed, one of the few reliable means for satisfying one's queries about how the aspirants after power compete for it, how the actual powerholders come to acquire power and how, further, power, after it is formally acquired, flows through the institutional channel.

With regard to political parties the political sociologist's focus is, however, different from that of a political scientist. While the political scientist views the political party as nothing but a political institution having immense relevance to the question about the formation and working of government in a modern state, the political sociologist, in addition, looks upon the party as essentially a social group, as, what Max Weber has called, "an associative type of social relationship, membership in which rests on formally free recruitment". It is a social group because, firstly, it embodies a system of interdependent activity and interpersonal relationships. Secondly, it operates in terms of goal-oriented coordinated actions in as far as it

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

demands from its members a rational direction of their behaviour towards commonly acknowledged goals. The range of this interdependent activity and the type of goals it is directed to, of course, varies depending on the social and political environment. Because, after all, political parties are nothing but a structural response to the patterns of social and political needs of a society.

Yet a political party is different from other social groups like families, churches and business firms; it has some special features that distinguish it from the latter. One such feature is to be found in the pattern of the goal a political party strives for. The primary goal of a political party is to secure political power and to hold it either singly or in cooperation with other political parties. It is this goal of attaining political power that distinguishes a political party from other social groups. In other words, the political party is ²“a type of social group, primarily concerned with social control as exercised through the government”. Often a party seeks to attain this political goal against the background of a common ideological belief shared by its members and in such a case this ideological perspective becomes another salient feature of the party that distinguishes it from other social groups. Again, unlike other social groups, a political party is very much a clientele-oriented organisation. That is to say, a party is always keen on catching as much clientele as possible and hence it tries to remain as far open as possible to its potential members and leaders. Thus of all the social groups the political party is the most permeable and adaptive organisation. The party, however, is not only keen on expanding its clientele for the sake of its own power aspirations; it as well brings advantage to the latter. Indeed, ³“the party is a mutually exploitative relationship—it is joined by those who would use it; it mobilises for the sake of power those who would join it.” Again, since the party is a clientele-oriented organisation it naturally accommodates different types of socio-economic interests. Thus a political party represents an aggregate of

Political Sociology

numerous types of social groupings and, viewed in this light, it appears to be an alliance of substructures or subcoalitions. Further, a political party is always marked by a hierarchical structure. There is, however, a speciality in this hierarchy in as far as it does not give rise to highly centralised control and keep power strictly confined among the members placed at the top of this hierarchy. Actually, the fact that a political party is, by nature, adaptive and that it has to accommodate heterogeneous interests forces it to diffuse power and devolve responsibility up to the local structural strata. Thus, "contrary to the bureaucratic and authoritarian models of social organisation, the party is not a precisely ordered system of authority and influence from the top down, though as a 'paper' structure it may give this appearance. The organisation does not function through the issuance of directives from the top which are obeyed without question. Rather, there is tolerance of autonomy, local initiative, local inertia." Lastly, unlike most of the other social groups, the political party embodies a career system. Although a political party is mainly preoccupied with the problem of acquiring power not all its members are power aspirants. A substantial section of its members are not power-seekers, but only status-seekers. They are within a party because that has a direct bearing on their career and it is mainly because of these careerists who remain firm in their commitment to the party task—no matter whether the party is in the midst of power or is just thrown out of it—that the party can manage to remain a durable organisation.

The distinctiveness of the political party as a social group, however, will be more evident when we take note of its important functions. A political party performs a wide range of functions an important among which is what is known as aggregation of interests. A political party, as we have seen, is a multi-interest group that represents diverse interests of the society. But what is more important, it harmonises these interests with each other, bridges thus the antagonisms between the

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

different groups of society and thereby seeks to produce a consensus among as many groups as possible. Thus sectional interests, once they are brought within the fold of the party, no longer remain sectional, geographical diversities under the purview of the party tend to be blurred and it is just for this that a party is able to arrive at a consistent and clear-cut policy. Once the diverse interests are thus made to converge within the framework of the party the political process is made much simplified and there emerges order and, therefore, stability in it. Political parties thus act as a very effective mediator in settling disagreements in society in a peaceful and institutional manner.

Another important function of the party is to ensure a two-way communication process between government and the people. It is mainly through the parties that the government is constantly kept informed about the general demands of society, about the interests and attitudes of the people in relation to the governing process. Similarly, it is through the parties that people get their political information. The parties organise and articulate public opinion in order to bring this opinion to bear on governmental decisions, they educate and instruct the people on public issues and simplify and clarify issue alternatives. The party activity in this regard, however, is not left confined merely within election times; it, in fact, goes on continuously and thus the party becomes an important agency of political participation.

Political recruitment is another important function of the political party. In a democracy political elites are recruited mainly through political parties; leaders of government are normally the leaders of political parties. In a one-party system, of course, this recruiting function of the political party assumes greater dimensions since in such a system political party happens to provide the only avenue to political power. The general patterns of party recruitment may, however, be classified as hegemonic and turn-over. In hegemonic recruitment pattern the same party or the same coalition of parties hold govern-

Political Sociology

mental power over a long period of time. In the turn-over type, on the contrary, there is a more frequent change in the party that rules or the party that dominates a coalition. Thus recruitment is more permanent in the hegemonic pattern than in the turn-over pattern. India provides a good example of the hegemonic recruitment while the turn-over recruitment is well illustrated by the British politics.

Fourthly, the party plays a very significant role in the process of political socialisation in a country. We have already seen that the party is a very important instrument for ensuring political involvement of the people. It is in course of extending the opportunities of this political involvement to the people that the party socialises them. The political socialisation performed by political parties may, however, assume two distinct forms. The party may either reinforce the existing political culture or it may try to alter the established political culture pattern by germinating new attitudes and beliefs. The reinforcement of the existing political culture by the political party may not necessarily contribute to the stability of the political system ; sometimes, it may have a dysfunctional effect on the political system. Thus when parties represent strong traditional and ethnic subcultures and seek to reinforce the same they, in effect, tend to produce a divisive particularism that may seriously affect the stability of the political system. Some of the Indian political parties with strong regional and communal leanings aptly illustrate this point. Again, it is hardly likely that in a socio-economic set-up quite stable and orderly the political parties will ever try to initiate new political culture or be successful in such an attempt since in such a situation very few will be attracted by the signs of a new wind of change in the atmosphere of established beliefs. When, however, the socio-economic conditions are in a state of flux and disruption the party's role in effecting changes in the existing political culture is likely to be more honoured. Indeed, a people confronted with conditions of radical social, economic and political changes

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

will lean more favourably to a party that disseminates a culture congenial to these changes. Thus in developing societies that are engaged in the work of radical social and political transformation the party's function of socialising the people by means of initiating changes in the political culture assumes a special importance.

However, the effectivity with which a political party can carry on political socialisation activities depends, to a large extent, on the internal structure of the party as well as on the pattern of social and political environment. And this is what makes it evident that although, on the basis of one's knowledge about the functions of the political party, parties may appear to be an independent variable they are actually a dependent variable too. And the best way to understand the political party as a dependent variable is to consider its structures and their possible determinants.

Maurice Duverger in his *Political Parties* speaks of four possible structures of parties which are the caucus, the branch, the cell and the militia. A caucus, more like a committee, comprises a small number of members and, least interested in its own further expansion, it does not indulge in any propaganda for extending its recruitment. It is actually a closed group, semi-permanent by nature, that intensifies its activities only during election times and remains almost inactive at other times. Its numerical weakness, however, should not be taken as a measure of its power which may, indeed, be very great because of the great influence and power of the few persons who happen to be its members. In a word, the caucus is a small group of well-known persons whose personal influence and capacity count more than their number. The American parties are, in essence, nothing but caucuses. Fundamentally, they are all electoral machines constituted by a team of experts in winning votes and of professional politicians.

While the caucus is a union of some notables chosen only because of their individual qualities and local influences the

branch appeals to the masses. Unlike the caucus the branch is not a closed group and unlike the former it is not only interested in quality but also in quantity. Thus the branch is always keen on recruiting as many members as possible. Its political activities are not merely confined to election times; they are, in fact, carried on continuously. Since the branch represents a group much larger than the caucus its internal organisation is more perfect than that of the latter. Thus, unlike in the caucus, the hierarchy of the branch is more definite and the division of duties in it is more precise. Moreover, the branch is more unified than the caucus. The branches and constituency organisations are firmly integrated into the well-articulated larger party organisation that lacks the intense localism and parochialism which are so much a characteristic of the caucus. The continental Socialist parties provide typical examples of the branch.

The cell, which is a typical invention of the revolutionary communist parties, is a much smaller group than the branch and, unlike the latter, its basis is not geographical but only occupational; it unites all party members who work at the same place. There can thus be factory, workshop, shop, office and administration cells, the geographical area where the members actually live being made no criterion for it. Since a cell comprises members who have the same occupation and who, therefore, meet daily in their work here there is constant contact among the members and hence the party solidarity is naturally stronger. This common occupational basis of the members further strengthens their solidarity in as far as the members, being in the same occupation, share the same fate. The cell works on the basis of an exclusive use of vertical links. In caucus and branch there are, generally, various formal and informal channels of contact among the local units. In the cell-structured party, on the other hand, the individual cell has no contact with other cells, but only with the higher echelons of the party. The cell is perfectly suited to clandestine actions which,

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

naturally, are not possible in case of the branch. The secret activities of the cell are more widely political and more demanding on the individual than the branch parties and the cell-structured parties usually give scant importance to winning elections. Indeed, "the choice of the cell as the basis of organisation entails a profound change in the very concept of a political party. Instead of a body intended for the winning of votes, for grouping the representatives, and for maintaining contact between them and their electors, the political party becomes an instrument of agitation, of propaganda, of discipline, and, if necessary, of clandestine action, for which elections and parliamentary debates are only one of several means of action, and a secondary means at that."

The militia is more like a kind of private army whose members are recruited on military lines and are subjected to the discipline and training that one usually comes across in a military organisation. The structure of the militia very much resembles the military hierarchical structure. Its members are organised in army-like squads, companies, battalions and so on. The militia is more disinterested in electoral and parliamentary activities than the cells since it is basically an instrument for overthrowing a democratic regime and not for strengthening it. Just as the cell is a communist invention, so the militia is a fascist creation. Hitler's Storm Troopers and Mussolini's fascist militia provide examples of the militia structure.

The structure of a political party is, however, conditioned by a number of variables. If the ideology a party upholds fits in well with the temper of the political system in the context of which the party works, it will naturally evolve a kind of structure on the basis of which it can carry on a style of activity contributory to the health of the political system. If, on the contrary, the party ideology is antagonistic to the values underlying the existing political system, the party in anticipation of a hostile treatment at the hands of political authority will evolve a kind of structure that may enable it to carry on its activity

in face of all possible repression and persecution. Similarly, the structure of a party is responsive to the general governmental structure. The structure of a party will, of course, differ depending on whether the government is unitary or federal or, again, whether it is parliamentary or presidential since a party will normally try to capture political power—which happens to be its primary goal—without affecting the general political framework of the country. The socio-economic conditions are another important variable. The level of economic development very much influences the competitive conditions of political life which, on their part, leave a perceptible impact on the structure of the party. Again, a party will respond differently to urban and rural societies and, accordingly, will have different structures. Thirdly, political culture is a very important determinant of the party structure. If the political culture of a society is imbued with liberal democratic values, a party will hardly be able to work on the basis of an undemocratic structure. Lastly, a country's political history also leaves its impact on the party structure. Political parties, after all, emerge at a particular juncture of history to combat specific historical situations and hence the historical factor cannot be overlooked while enquiring into the determinants of party structure. The present structure of the Congress party of India cannot be fully understood unless one takes into account the colonial conditions in which it emerged.

Parties may be classified not only on the basis of their structure but also in terms of other criteria. A very frequently used criterion is the number of parties in the party system. Thus there can be the single-party system, the two-party system and the multi-party system. Within each of these categories, however, there may be further variations. Thus there may be the authoritarian one-party system that represents a single, monolithic, ideologically oriented but non-totalitarian party. Franco's Spain, Nkrumah's Ghana and Diem's South Vietnam provide examples of this type. Again, there may be the pluralistic one-

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

party system which is characterised by a single party that is pluralistic in organisation, less ideological in outlook, and absorptive rather than ruthlessly destructive in its relations with other groups. Mexico's Republican party, over most of the years since the Mexican Revolution, would illustrate this type. Thirdly, there may be the totalitarian one-party system where state power is monopolised by a monolithic party which, representing a dominant ideology, ruthlessly controls all aspects of social, economic and political activity. China, the Soviet Union, Vietnam, North Korea and several of the East European states provide examples of this type.

Two-party system may further be classified into distinct two-party system to be found in Britain, Australia and West Germany and indistinct two-party system as illustrated by the United States. In the former the parties are more centralised and ideology-based; they have a hierarchical structure and their activities are not merely confined to election times. In the latter the parties are not really mass parties; they give less emphasis on ideologies and are more interested in winning elections.

Multi-party system may also be classified into working multi-party system and unstable multi-party system as represented respectively by Norway and Sweden, on the one hand, and by France and Italy, on the other. In the former the parties behave more on the pattern of the distinct two-party system, hardly affecting the workability of government while in the latter multiplicity of parties leads to a frequent change in government, affecting thus the stability of the governmental order. Sometimes, within the framework of a multi-party system, there emerges what is known as dominant party system. In a dominant party system, in course of the working of the multi-party system, one party emerges much stronger than all the other parties and institutionally establishes its dominance in the political system. The Congress party of India with its continuous dominance over the Indian political scene provides

Political Sociology

an ideal illustration of this type.

On the basis of the rigidity of party doctrines parties may further be classified as pragmatic and ideological. The pragmatic parties are more programmatic and less ideological; they are also broker-bargaining parties in as far as they seek to accommodate as many groups as possible in order to win an electoral majority. The American parties are clearly of this type. The Congress party of India also very much comes under this category. The ideological parties are more doctrinaire-dogmatic. They avoid political bargaining and compromise and, naturally, are intolerant of any form of political opposition. The Chinese and Russian Communist parties are of this type. In between these two types there may be a third type represented by a generally flexible and broker-bargaining party which is keen on getting as many supporters as possible, but which, at the same time, limits its appeal by representing only certain groups of voters or embracing certain doctrines. The United Malays National Organisation of Malaysia illustrates this type.

The variations in the party system are only indicative of the fact that different societies may have different modes of conflict-management. In most cases the mode of this conflict-management, on its part, is found to be dependent on the type of socio-economic environment in the context of which these conflicts emerge. A developed industrial society essentially thrives on division of labour and specialisation of occupational activities which naturally give birth to too many diverse interests. In the face of these diverse interests an industrial society manages to survive just because all these interests are threaded together in terms of coordinated social actions. Thus an industrial society works and, indeed, works well just because, forced by the objective needs, it manages to arrive at a consensus—an agreement that the paramount goal is decidedly to increase economic productivity at any cost and thus to keep the society going and that for the sake of this goal the diversity of social interests must never be led to a point of

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

open belligerence among them. It is for this reason that in a developed industrial society one comes across either a bi-party system or a multi-party system since it is impossible for a single party to represent the myriad interests of such a society. Moreover, since such a society functions in the context of a general consensus the competition among the political parties never leads them to an irreconcilable hostility that may endanger the stability of the political system. Moreover, in such a society, the homogenising effect of urbanisation that accompanies industrialisation and an effective network of communications which is also an important feature of the industrial society, further, facilitate the process of conflict-management.

When, on the contrary, the society is industrially backward and, therefore, is not, like an industrial society, constrained by circumstances to achieve a consensus, when, further, it is more subjected to the traditional particularistic and parochial forces it is likely to be marked by a bitter clash of interests. In such a society too many political parties representing various sectional interests are likely to take the political competition in a spirit of hostility, thereby seriously affecting the stability of the political system. Sometimes, the resulting disorder may be so frustrating that it may corrode the ability of the parties to compete effectively for political power and in the midst of this confusion and disorder a particular political party may suddenly assume unusual strength, ultimately bringing in a dominant party system or a pluralistic one-party system. Recent experiences of most of the Afro-Asian states amply illustrate this point.

It is, however, worth-noting that the correlation between socio-economic variables and party development cannot be so easily established in case of the totalitarian one-party system. The totalitarian one-party system certainly belies the thesis that increasing diversity of interests generated by an industrial society and the general social climate of consensus also brought in by the needs of an industrial society necessitate the growth of more than one party that does not, in any way, affect the

Political Sociology

stability of the political order. This exception with regard to the totalitarian one-party system can perhaps be explained by the fact that a totalitarian system is more interested in evolving a uniformity of interests than in working out a synthesis between the conflicting interests and this is sought to be secured by harnessing the society towards a rigid uniformity by bringing it under the strictest control of the state. Indeed, the political party in this system works as the most important agency for wielding this political control over the whole of society. In other words, the party here is more used as an effective instrument for bringing in the desired social change. And this is what reveals that a political party is not only a reflection of the socio-economic forces, but it as well may condition the character of a society. Although this is more evident in totalitarian systems, in liberal democratic systems too this function of the party may often be noticed. Thus the effective working of a bi-party system within a democratic political framework may make a society a great believer in the art of compromise and peaceful negotiations and abhorrent of violence and ultra-radical ideas and activities.

II

If the political party is a significant social group having a great deal of relevance to the functioning of the modern political process, so is, indeed, the pressure group. The emergence of pressure groups is to be explained by almost the same social conditions that account for the growth of political parties. A mature society with its increasing specialisation and differentiation gives rise to a host of needs and interests that, for their effective channelling to the political process, necessitate the growth of a great number of secondary associations. Political parties and pressure groups are the two most important types of these much-needed secondary structures. Hence the pressure group is not a novel political phenomenon currently evi-

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

dent in the political process of modern societies. It is, indeed, as old as the political party and, in certain instances, must have been older than the political party since in some countries, at least, political parties have originated as pressure groups which, in course of time, have got converted into political parties. Thus in Britain the formation of Labour Party in 1906 was preceded by the formation in 1900 of the Labour Representation Committee which was technically a pressure group. Similarly, in India the Indian National Congress, as it was founded in 1885, was more a pressure group which took quite a number of years to assume the form of a full-fledged political party.

Yet pressure group has only recently been a matter of academic enquiry. Indeed, political scientists, much as they were over-occupied with the study of political parties, persistently ignored pressure groups until Political Sociology emerged with its shift in emphasis and brought pressure groups within the scope of its enquiry. Thus the study of pressure groups is only a twentieth century development. It was initiated by the group approach to politics introduced by Arthur F. Bentley in his *The Process of Government* published in 1908—a tradition reinforced later by David B. Truman in his *The Governmental Process* published in 1951. The term 'pressure group', however, was used neither by Bentley nor by Truman. It was, perhaps, used, for the first time, by Peter Odegard in his book *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* published in 1928. The term pressure group, however, was detested for long for its pejorative connotations. Only very recently one watches a tendency among some political sociologists to bear with the bad flavour of the word 'pressure'. This has been possible mainly because of the recent academic discovery that in modern society there are different types of groups, quite distinct from political parties, that continue influencing the political process and the only convenient way of studying these groups together is to bring them all under pressure group as the umbrella term.

Political Sociology

A pressure group is an organised social group whose members share common attitudes, beliefs or interests and which seeks to influence public policies in the light of these attitudes or interests without ever trying to take over any responsibility for government. This formal definition indicates not only what a pressure group is but also what it is not. Thus in a society there may be groups which, although important in politics, do have so much hazy organisations that their members often fail to recognise themselves for what they are—as the Clapham Sect and the Benthamites in British politics and the ‘Pro-changers’ and ‘No-changers’ in Indian politics—which cannot be called pressure groups just because they lack specified formal organisations. Similarly, groups having a very limited dealing with the organisation of the state cannot be called pressure groups. There may, again, be others which are legally, no doubt, organised groups but which, however, are so constituted that it is difficult to be sure about who their real members are; these also cannot be called pressure groups. Thus “I.C.I. and the City of Manchester are in a legal sense organised groups, and they are certainly entities which exercise influence on government, but here the gap between formal and informal organisation is so wide that we shall never get outside the lawyer’s world if we start from the Articles and Memorandum of Association or from the Charter of Incorporation with the relevant Acts.” Thus a social group may be called a pressure group only when (i) it has a clearly identifiable formal structure, (ii) its members are linked to each other in terms of their common attitude or interest and (iii) it seeks to influence the process of public decision-making.

At least two of these features are also the characteristics of a political party which, no doubt, has an organised structure and which, further, is ever keen on regulating the decision-making on its own terms. Yet a pressure group differs from a political party in many respects. In the first place, the political party being essentially a clientele-oriented organisation accom-

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

modates heterogeneous interests and tries to reconcile these interests with each other. A pressure group, on the contrary, draws to itself only those who share a common attitude or hold a common interest and its main function is to canalise this attitude or interest to the political decision-makers with the aim of influencing the latter's policies in the perspective of this attitude or interest. Thus, unlike the political party, the pressure group is not a multi-interest group putting a great emphasis on the function of interest aggregation. It is a social group that represents a far more homogeneous interest and is more interested in an effective articulation of this interest. Secondly, it is because of its membership base much wider than that of the pressure group that it is possible for the political party to have policies on a much wide range of issues covering almost every field of governmental activity—a thing hardly possible in case of a pressure group. A pressure group being more interested in articulating its own particular interest, naturally, cannot be expected to have policies on issues unrelated to the interest it represents. Thirdly, the political party is not merely content with formulating policies on very many issues, but, for the sake of giving effect to these policies, tries to run the government and with this aim in view does whatever is required to do—like nominating candidates for political offices and fighting elections and that, too, sometimes against the background of a particular ideology it espouses—in order to enter the formal competition for political power. A pressure group, on the other hand, always avoids the corridors of political power. The rituals related to the competition for political power do not interest it. It goes on promoting its particular interest or attitude and picks up only those political issues that are integrally connected with them.

These differences between the pressure group and the political party are more prominent in the American political system; but in others it is not always very easy to clearly draw a dividing line between the two. Thus in some political systems

Political Sociology

a political party is found to have successfully accommodated some of the important pressure groups. For example, in Britain, the Labour Party is mainly composed of trade unions whose members have acquired indirect membership in the party. Similarly, most of the Catholic parties in the European continent are closely linked up with Catholic trade unions and various Catholic lay organisations. Again, in some political systems, as in France, some of the political parties are, in actual practice, nothing but pressure groups. Further, in some countries, pressure groups work more as agents of political parties in as far as they give greater importance to the respective political goals of the parties than to the articulation of their own interests. This is clearly exemplified by the Indian trade unions working under the direct control of political parties. Yet it is worthwhile to identify a pressure group as a social group distinct from a political party and to take note of its functions, strategies and influences. Such a kind of study stresses the fact that there is, after all, an 'anonymous empire' in a society that cannot be located within the formal structure of politics but which has not an insignificant relevance to the political process. And this is what substantiates the claim of Political Sociology that politics is not necessarily a matter related to the formally recognised political institutions, but is what can also be spotted outside the fixed playground of political variables.

Pressure groups can broadly be divided into two categories—the attitude group and the interest group. An attitude group is formed on the basis of its members sharing some common attitudes or values. Here the members drawn from diverse interests are linked together by their common attitude or values. The C.N.D., the R.S.P.C.A., the Calcutta Beautification Society are some of the examples of the attitude group. The members of an attitude group, of course, share a common attitude; after all, no organised group can work without its members having been able to arrive at some unity of attitude and approach. In that sense an interest group is, no doubt, an

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

attitude group; but, then, it is something more than that in as far as its members reach this attitudinal unity by virtue of the fact that they all represent the same interest. Thus the Automobile Association of Eastern India, the Jute Manufacturers Association, the West Bengal College and University Teachers Association are all examples of the interest group. The basic difference between the attitude group and the interest group lies in the fact that while the former is to be known by its subjective base the latter has very much an objective base. And it is because of this that it is not easy to determine the potential membership of an attitude group as it is difficult to make certain, for instance, who are the people in a society detesting cruelty to animals or wishing to ban nuclear weapons. In case of interest groups, however, one does not face such a difficulty since there can be little doubt about the fact that all the university and college teachers of West Bengal are the potential members of the W.B.C.U.T.A. Further, interest groups tend to be more permanent than the attitude groups. Once an attitude group is successful in having achieved its goal of influencing governmental policies it is likely to disband or at least remain inactive in relation to the political process. But since the interest group is ever keen on flourishing its interest it is likely to remain a permanent group seeking to influence, now and then, the governmental decisions. And this explains why the interest group will generally be more powerful than the attitude group.

It is possible, after 'Almond and Powell, to divide interest groups into four basic categories. Thus there may be anomic interest groups primarily interested in actions like riots, demonstrations, assassinations, etc. Anomic interest groups are usually the products of high tension and discontent in a society caused by the non-growth of explicitly organised groups set to the goal of articulating various interests of a society or by the utter failure of organised groups in their function of interest articulation just because they are denied adequate opportunities for per-

Political Sociology

forming this function. Many of the newly independent Afro-Asian countries characterised by a rigidly centralised political order and a political culture hostile to pluralisation of political power have provided an ideal playground for anomic interest groups. Sometimes, even in a developed society where the organised groups enjoy a pluralist climate congenial to their effective functioning, anomic interest groups may suddenly come into being just because the organised pressure groups feeling rather unsure about the efficacy of their usual techniques, for a change, take to unconventional or violent means.

Secondly, in a society one may come across what are called nonassociational interest groups like the kinship and lineage groups, the ethnic, regional, status and class groups. They are so called because they do not have a clearly delimited formal structure, nor an organised procedure of action and, further, being least interested in carrying on their activities continuously, they, at best, try to have only an intermittent articulation of interests. Thus when an informal delegation from a certain ethnic group puts up some proposals to the Prime Minister of India for giving it certain reliefs, or, say, when some newspaper editors in a meeting at the Press Club make certain requests to a bureaucrat regarding the policy on government advertisements in newspapers, we find the nonassociational interest groups in action. However, the more and more a society is developed, the more and more will it affect the growth of nonassociational interest groups. Because in a developed society the group competition is naturally very high and in the face of this stiff competition among highly organised groups it is difficult for a nonassociational interest group to survive and operate. This is why, in most cases, in modern societies nonassociational interest groups, in course of time, are forced to abandon their original character by developing organisation and procedure and thus cease to be nonassociational any longer.

Thirdly, there may be institutional interest groups that grow within the framework of formal institutions like political parties,

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

legislatures, armies, bureaucracies, etc. The institutional interest group is, actually, a group within a group that, no doubt, works toward the declared goal of the parent body and accepts whatever responsibility is entrusted on it by the latter; but, at the same time, it develops a distinct interest, systematically works for its articulation and tries to strengthen the base of its operation by whatever use it can make of the institutional position it enjoys by remaining within the parent organisation. Thus within a party there may evolve a party clique that may articulate its particular interest in the midst of the general function of interest aggregation to which the party as a whole is committed. Similarly, there may be legislative blocs, officer cliques, skill groups—all trying to influence the legislature, lobby with administrative organs or persuade the people through the mass media for winning the latter's support for their demands. In modern societies institutional interest groups are found to hold a very powerful position. It is more so in underdeveloped societies whose political culture is usually less favourable for wider group activities at the general social plane.

Lastly, there may be associational interest groups by which are meant the clearly identifiable and viable interest groups of a society. They have a formal specialised structure, a full-time professional staff and an organised and orderly procedure. The particular interests they represent are clearly discernible and because of the systematic and consistent methods they employ for articulating their respective interests these types of interest groups are found to be quite powerful in their capacity to influence governmental decisions. Moreover, the more and more associational interest groups develop in a society, the more and more they tend to block the growth and operation of other types of interest groups which, in effect, further enhances their strength. Trade unions, organisations of businessmen or industrialists, ethnic associations, civic groups, etc. are some of the examples of associational interest groups.

A pressure group operates in an environment dominated also

Political Sociology

by other groups and by the governmental institutions. The type of this environment is an important determinant of its strategy and tactics. While the objective of a pressure group may converge with that of some groups it may also face a conflict of interests in relation to some others. Again, the governmental institutions representing the decision-makers who actually are the target of a pressure group's activity may have either an attitude of hostility or of sympathy to a particular pressure group, making it for the latter either difficult or easy to convince the former that the demands it is placing deserve attention or response. Thirdly, political parties are also an important part of the environment. Weaker parties make wide room for pressure group activity while the position is just the reverse when the parties are very strong. Moreover, a strong party may force a pressure group to spend a lot of its resources for influencing the former; in some cases, a strong party may succeed in bringing a pressure group under its control and direction. Lastly, the people and their political culture are also an important element in the environment that a pressure group can hardly disregard. As in India, the political culture of a people may make them abhorrent of the particularism of the pressure groups and hence cynical about group activities. Or, as in France, people may have greater faith in direct action and violent agitations than in the less spectacular, cool bargaining usually resorted to by pressure groups. Or, again, as in the U.S.A., people may have much political tolerance for pressure group activities.

In any case, faced with the environment comprising these various elements, a pressure group has two kinds of choice before it : either it may try to adapt its objectives to the pattern of the environment in which it is placed or it may try to change this environment so that it suits its own objectives. In other words, the basic strategy of a pressure group may either be one of adjustment or be one of struggle and, accordingly, it evolves its style of action. There are thus a host of techniques

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

one or other of which may be employed by a pressure group depending on the demands of the existing environment.

The primary goal of a pressure group is to influence the governmental decisions in terms of its own demands. Thus mere conveying its demands to the decision-makers is not enough; what is necessary is to make out a convincing case. Accordingly, a pressure group may sometimes try to create a climate of public opinion supporting its cause and for this it may start a public campaign. The public campaign, which is quite a costly affair and, therefore, more likely to be undertaken by the wealthier groups, may take different forms. Thus there may be what is called 'public relations campaign' by which a group tries to project a favourable image of itself among the general public. A pressure group usually does this by inserting advertisements in the newspapers, issuing leaflets and pamphlets, holding symposia and seminars, arranging filmshows, etc. In all this the attempt is to build a status for the group in the public eye. Again, a pressure group may start a campaign in order to educate the people on certain matters that are of vital concern to it. While these two types of campaign are long-term efforts to win public support for certain broad viewpoints there may be another type of campaign—known as the 'fire brigade campaign'—which is a short-term intensive campaign to stir up public opposition to or to create a public support for a particular legislative measure. Sometimes, just in anticipation of a legislation, a campaign of this kind may be launched as it so happened in the famous "Mr. Cube" campaign of 1949-50 in Britain. The campaign, generally, is a very favourite technique to the American pressure groups.

A pressure group may sometimes favour the technique of physical demonstrations and violence. We have noted earlier how it is the very characteristic of the anomic interest groups to make use of physical demonstrations, riots, etc. But every kind of pressure group is, in fact, found to adopt this technique in certain situations. The only difference between these two

Political Sociology

cases is that while adopting violent methods is spontaneous in case of the anomic group in case of other groups such a course of action is, without doubt, a calculated move. One should, of course, remember that a pressure group may be forced to resort to this technique just because in the given situation it appears to it as the only effective one or just because this happens to be the natural consequence of a general mood of frustration and alienation prevailing all around or, again, because the pressure group is totally hostile to the existing environment and hence indulges in violence. Another possible explanation may be that a country's historical development and political culture make physical demonstrations and violent agitations a very effective means of achieving political gains. Peru provides a classic example in this regard and, perhaps, too the Indian condition until very recently; a few years back a violent demonstration by the anti-cow-slaughter group in India's capital forced the resignation of an important member of the Central Government of India.

Sometimes, personal connection is well utilised by the members of a pressure group for persuading the decision-makers to effect the policy-changes the former are looking for. The pressure group explores family, school, local and social ties and, at these intimate levels, is sometimes able to carry on an informal dialogue to a successful end. ⁸“Where the contact occurs in an atmosphere of cordiality and friendship, the likelihood of a favourable response is improved. Demands articulated by a friend, a relative, or a neighbour are much more effective than a formal approach to a total stranger.” And this is where a pressure group may have the opportunity of bribing the decision-makers although a strong and self-confident pressure group will, of course, desist from such a practice since good reputation and clean record are, no doubt, one of the surest means of its influence.

Another important technique of a pressure group is to make infiltrations into the powerholders, to put pressure not from

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

outside but from within the area of decision-making. The main targets of this infiltration are usually the legislature and the government. The infiltration within the legislative body is naturally sought to be secured through political parties. For having this infiltration within the legislature a pressure group, in a multi-party system, may even set up its own candidates in elections and these candidates, if elected, represent in the legislature the interest of the group they belong to. In a two-party system where the parties are much stronger and the political competition is quite intense it is, however, not possible for a pressure group to enter the electoral battle on its own. What it usually tries to do in such a situation is to see that some of its members can get party tickets and once it is successful in this move and its members win elections it can have a bloc to represent its interests in the legislature. To use a political party for having infiltrations within the legislature a pressure group may even go to the extent of lavishly contributing to the funds of the party. Infiltration into the government, however, is far more effective than legislative infiltration. Thus a pressure group would very much like to see that some governmental positions are held by its members. In the United States it is not an uncommon sight that some of the important posts of public service are held by some prominent executives of big business. As far as the infiltration into the government is concerned, the institutional interest groups, naturally, play a very important role. An interest group working within the bureaucracy is in daily contact with the actual decision-makers and hence is in a more advantageous position for making infiltrations into government.

Since in a society there are multiple agencies of political decision-making there may be various points of entry for a pressure group. To which point would be given greater importance by a pressure group would, of course, depend on which agency is more important and more responsive than others and that, further, would depend on the

Political Sociology

nature of the political institutional structure. Thus in a political system like that of the U.S.A. where the legislature enjoys a larger share of authority in the process of law-making pressure groups naturally concentrate much of their activity at the Congressional level. Among the legislators there may be 'resisters', 'neutrals' and the 'facilitators'. The third category comprises a pressure group's friends and allies much with whose help it seeks to persuade the other types to vote for the position it espouses. Again, as we have said earlier, a pressure group, utilising its connections with political parties, may secure some seats in the legislature for its own members. When this is the case it is easier for a pressure group to function at the legislative level. This, however, does not mean that at the legislative level it is always a very smooth sailing for a pressure group. Indeed, in its dealings with the legislators a pressure group will have to take measured steps. At least in the American system it has been found that an overzealous pressure group is likely to be subjected to the Congressional investigation of pressure group practices and even to the possibility of stricter group regulations by a statutory law like the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act of 1946.

Further, in countries like the U.S.A. where committee stage constitutes the most significant part of the legislative process pressure groups tend to make much use of the committee hearings. In the U.S.A. the pressure groups appear at the public hearing sessions of the Congressional committees and present their cases. Sometimes, the information they supply to the committees is of considerable help to the latter and this ability to furnish information serves as an important source of its influence. In some cases a pressure group's activity at the committee level is not primarily intended to influence the committee members, but rather to make a general propaganda and to gain publicity in the press so that a general climate of opinion, in support of its move, grows in the country. All this, however, should not lead one to think that at the legislative front a

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

pressure group always operates publicly. Indeed, at this level considerable activity is carried on by a pressure group behind the scenes. And the more it is able to carry on successfully this back-the-stage operations, the more it is effective in attaining its goal. In pressure politics noise is not a necessary aid of political strength. This is, perhaps, more true when the pressure group decides to work at the level of the legislature. It is, in fact, easier for a pressure group to successfully bargain with the legislators off the public stage since secrecy, after all, does not offend the legislator's concern for maintaining, at any cost, a very high image of the legislature.

In a country like Great Britain, on the other hand, where cabinet is more important as decision-maker than the legislature and where, further, because of a wide use of delegated legislation, civil service plays not an unimportant role in this regard pressure groups, naturally, tend to be more active at the levels of ministry and bureaucracy. When a pressure group has been able to have some infiltration into the ministry or bureaucracy it is easier for it to leave its influence on the policies of government. But even when this has not been possible prominent interest groups in a society—especially the economic interest groups—may have a good deal of success at the governmental level just because the government needs various types of assistance from them. Thus the Whitehall, according to S.E. Finer, needs three things from the pressure groups. "First of all it needs information. No ministry has or can afford to have a staff familiar with all the technical detail in British professional and industrial practice. Next it seeks consents. Since the basis of smooth administration is a favourable public opinion, it is prudent to consult the affected publics in advance of final decisions. Where such publics are organised, consultation is that much the easier....Again, the ministry may require the active help of the organisation in administering a policy." It is by way of providing this assistance that a pressure group is often able to have established a close cooperative relation with

Political Sociology

the government. Often this relation is formally institutionalised—as has been done in Britain, Switzerland and notably in Sweden—through the formation of various permanent advisory committees in which members of government sit together with the representatives of different pressure groups. But, side by side with these formal contacts, there may be very many informal contacts well utilised by a pressure group to influence the government—the nature of these contacts, of course, varying from situation to situation.

Although the standing norm of liberal democracy on judicial neutrality and independence usually keeps the judicial field out of the area of pressure group activities, at least, in the U.S.A. pressure groups are found to be quite active at the judicial level too. Thus the Presidential appointees to the American Supreme Court are not always free from pressure group influence. Further, the American pressure groups often play an active role in litigation to test the constitutionality of different pieces of legislation. They also make use of the device of 'amicus curiae'—which extends opportunity to a party not directly involved in a case to present legal arguments on grounds that the decision resulting from this case would actually affect its interests—and thereby try to enlighten judges on precedents and other legal points relevant to the case and favourable to their position.

Official agencies alone do not receive the attention of pressure groups. A pressure group has to lobby at the level of political parties and also at the level of other pressure groups. The type of lobbying in relation to political parties, of course, varies depending on the type of political conditions. Thus in a country where parties are not sufficiently strong—a phenomenon more likely in multi-party systems—a pressure group will be more intent on working independently of political parties. On the contrary, where the parties are very strong—which is generally the characteristic of bi-party system or the dominant party system—pressure groups would tend to work

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

in close cooperation with the political parties or might even try to work under the affiliation of one or other of the parties. With regard to other pressure groups a pressure group may have either a relation of cooperation or competition. When a group's objectives run counter to those of others it will, naturally, try to convert its opponents or seek a compromise or, at the worst, reach a stalemate. When, on the contrary, a group finds its potential friends in some others its lobbying is likely to be directed toward bringing them all together so that the pressure on policies may be stronger and more effective.

Gaining access to governmental apparatus will be really fruitful or a pressure group will be able to vie successfully with the political parties or with other pressure groups only when it commands sufficient influence which, however, is dependent on various factors. The way a pressure group is organised, the importance attached to it by its members and the quality of membership are, no doubt, important variables. If the group is tightly organised, if it is able to mobilise the support and resources of its members, if it is large in number, if it has a united leadership which is more interested in representing the interests of the members and not in pursuing its own interests and if, further, the group has no near competitor, its influence is likely to be strong and effective. The size of a group's purse is, no doubt, an important factor, especially when a pressure group intends to embark on an extensive public relations campaign that involves a lot of expenditure. The paucity of financial resources may, however, be compensated by a group's expertise. Professional bodies like medical associations may often find it unnecessary to undertake expensive public relations campaign since their widely recognised technical skill and knowledge may easily be converted into a political skill that may serve as a very good instrument for securing their influence on governmental policies. Again, to be effective a group must have an internal structure thoroughly consistent with the general political structure of the country. For instance, if new regional

government bodies are set up, a pressure group cannot work effectively unless it organises itself regionally in order to maintain a parity between its own structure and that of the government. Moreover, a group is more influential when its aspirations and interests fit in with the dominant values of the society. Thus, in the U.S.A., business groups enjoy ready access to the decision-makers and are able to influence the latter more effectively just because American culture is marked by a great reverence for private businessmen.

The way a pressure group articulates its interest is, of course, a very important determinant of its effectiveness. A group is more likely to succeed in influencing policies in terms of its demands when it communicates its demands in a clear and unambiguous manner and when, further, these demands accurately reflect the needs generating them. In other words, the more is the style of interest articulation latent, diffuse and vague, the greater is the difficulty for a pressure group in establishing its influence. Again, a pressure group's influence is conditioned by its ability to successfully identify its sectional interest with the general public interest. Overemphasis on its particularistic demands may tend to make a pressure group unpopular and, therefore, less influential. A group must be able to establish that its causes and claims are just and also necessary for the public advantage. In other words, while pursuing its private advantage, a pressure group must, at least, create the impression that, while articulating its private interest, it is actually aiming at the public advantage. A group's influence, further, is likely to be affected, if it decides to function in terms of a rigid ideological frame. In India, for instance, the ideological overtones of different trade unions have seriously affected their unity or close collaboration and, as a consequence, Indian trade unions, as pressure groups, have failed to reach a high level of effectivity. Last, but not the least, autonomy is, no doubt, the most important means for ensuring a pressure group's influence. The more and more a group has to work

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

in subordination to other groups and parties, the less and less will be its impact on public policies despite its best efforts at the various responsive points of the decision-making process.

Restrictions on pressure group effectivity may, however, be caused by other factors. One such barrier may be what is called the 'counter-vailing' pressure emanating from a situation where the operation of one pressure group is, to a large extent, affected by that of another with exactly a contrary goal. Thus the jute bag manufacturers' group may be greatly neutralised by the polythene bag manufacturers' association. When of such two opposing groups one is better organised and equipped with greater resources it may survive this counter-vailing pressure. But when both the groups are equally strong and militant it is more likely that their group pressures will cancel each other out. Another limitation results from overlapping membership. It is rarely possible for a pressure group to command complete loyalty of its members who may just happen to be members of other pressure groups as well. Divided loyalty may weaken the effectivity of a pressure group which may not try to go the whole hog in pursuing its aims since it knows well that it will not receive the fullest attention and support from its members. The effectivity, further, suffers, if it so happens that the different groups of which there are common members pursue conflicting aims. Thus, in any case, overlapping membership always tends to blunt the sharpness of a group demand and may even, in the worst case, immobilise it on certain issues. V.O. Key reports how ¹⁰"in a recent Massachusetts campaign on a proposal to modify legislation prohibiting the dissemination of birth-control information, the state medical society refrained from taking a position in deference to its minority Roman Catholic membership."

Although political parties and pressure groups are the products of almost a similar social environment pressure groups, for their growth and operation, demand a much higher level of maturity in these social conditions. In other words, com-

Political Sociology

pared to political parties, pressure groups are more a necessary feature of highly developed societies that have undergone industrial, technological and scientific revolutions resulting in a speedy process of urbanisation and education, an extensive development of communications and an inter-dependent and well-coordinated social and economic life. The needs and interests of such societies are too many to be handled adequately by primary groups or by political parties alone and this is what explains the emergence of pressure groups that look after the host of interests which continue to expand their volumes with the further expansion of these societies. Thus pressure groups are to be found mostly in the western developed societies. In all the underdeveloped societies of Asia and Africa—barring a few exceptions like Singapore and Malaysia—few pressure groups are found to be active. For the same reason autocratic political systems marked by their backward societies do not provide a fertile ground for the growth of pressure groups. The same explanation, however, cannot be given about the totalitarian systems where, despite the achievement of a high level of socio-economic development, pressure groups, as we understand them, are conspicuous by their absence. The possible explanation of this is to be searched in the ideology guiding these political systems that lays stress more on the unity of interests rather than on the pluralisation of interests.

REFERENCES

1. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, The Free Press New York, Paperback Edition, 1964, p. 407.
2. C. E. Merriam & H. F. Gosnell, *American Party System*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1949, p. 464.
3. S. J. Eldersveld, *Political Parties : A Behavioural Analysis*, Vora & Co. Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1971, p. 5.
4. *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.
5. Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1964, pp. 35-36.
6. W. J. M. Mackenzie, "Pressure Groups in British Government" in *British Journal of Sociology*, 1955, Vol. VI, p. 136.
7. G. A. Almond & G. B. Powell, Jr., *Comparative Politics : A Develop-*

Political Parties and Pressure Groups

- mental Approach, Amerind Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1972, pp. 74-79.
8. Ibid, p. 83.
 9. S. E. Finer, *Anonymous Empire*, The Pall Mall Press Ltd., London, 1958, pp. 30-31.
 10. V. O. Key, Jr., *Politics, Parties & Pressure Groups*, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1964, pp. 150-51.

CHAPTER 11

THE POLITICS OF CHANGE

To the political sociologist the essence of politics consisting in recurrent conflict situations which are caused by the scarcity of resources—an omnipresent feature of every modern society—never undergoes any fundamental change. Indeed, as we have seen earlier, it is on this assumption that rests the possibility of politics as understood in Political Sociology. Although Political Sociology thus takes the essence of politics to be unalterable it, however, does not fail to take note of political change, meaning by the latter, of course, nothing but a structural change in politics. What causes this structural political change and what possible forms it may assume are the two most important enquiries to a political sociologist.

Quite in line with the modern approaches to the phenomenon of change, Political Sociology understands political change not as a self-generated spontaneous process, but as necessarily a consequential response to certain pressing needs and demands. However, the political insitutional sphere is not taken to be the exclusive place of origin of these needs and demands. That is, Political Sociology considers the problem of political change in the light of the belief that its causes are lying scattered throughout the whole gamut of society. In other words, "political change is intricately related to a wide spectrum of social and economic factors". Thus industrialisation, urbanisation, technological and educational developments, etc., give birth to new values, higher aspirations and a larger set of demands. In order that the political process may aptly fit in with these new forces of social change political change takes place. The extent, direction and speed of this political change may not, however, be always commensurate with those of the socio-economic changes, causing serious tension and dis-

The Politics of Change

satisfaction that may ultimately erupt into protest against the political regime.

Thus protest, basically, is not a sudden political accident that can be studied in isolation. To understand fully its nature and direction what is necessary is to place it in the perspective of an interaction between social and political variables. Not all kinds of protest, however, are violent by nature. Protest may very well be peaceful like verbal criticism, written criticism, petitions, picketing, marches, non-violent civil disobedience, etc. Sometimes, a protest may begin quite peacefully, but having met an indifferent or hostile response from the authorities may ultimately assume a violent form. When, however, violence accompanies protest it must be noted that this violence ²“is usually not planned, but arises out of an interaction between protesters and the reaction of authorities ; and that recommendations concerning the prevention of violence which do not address the issue of fundamental social, economic, and political change are fated to be largely irrelevant and frequently self-defeating.” Violence, in other words, is more than a mere political problem and it is just for this reason that the political sociologist brings it within the scope of his enquiry.

In modern complex society the extent to which protest is likely to be associated with violence is very much conditioned by the presence of what is called ‘relative deprivation’ of groups or individuals. By relative deprivation is meant ³“the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the ‘ought’ and the ‘is’ of collective value satisfaction.” Modern society makes available a wide set of values like wealth, status, power, security, equality, freedom, etc. and the more and more the society is developed the higher and higher is the level of general aspiration for achieving these values. When persons or groups in a society cannot attain the values they aspire after or are only able to achieve one at the cost of losing some others, they feel deprived, dissatisfied and angry. It is this type of situation that is known as the condition of relative deprivation which serves

Political Sociology

as the ideal breeding ground for violence.

To generate violence the sense of relative deprivation must be sufficiently intense and must be experienced by sufficiently broad section of people or by groups strategically capable of conducting violent acts. The intensity may be caused by a number of factors. Thus the greater is the aspiration for a particular type of value the higher will be the degree of frustration in case of non-attainment of this value which, in effect, will lead to a greater propensity for violence. Again, a group is very likely to react violently if, reaching a point very near to the attainment of the value it longs for, it suddenly faces the possibility of denial. Again, whenever various opportunities are available for attaining a value, but these opportunities are restricted for a particular group the latter is more likely to turn violent. Like the intensity the scope of deprivation is as well important. When deprivation is felt by a large number of people, as is the case of the large number of unemployed youths in India, or by groups strategically well-fitted for violent acts, as is the case of the military in modern state, chances of violence are greater.

Howsoever intense and wide in scope is the relative deprivation of a people, it cannot, in actual practice, generate violence unless it is accompanied by some other favourable factors. Thus the deprived, although they may feel very strongly about their deprivation, may take it to be the natural order of things or may not have any confidence in their ability to force a change in the existing order. Again, the deprived may just stupefy under the influence of a political culture that tends to treat violence as illegitimate. In other words, if a deprived group intensely feel about their relative deprivation and if, at the same time, they are convinced of the necessity and legitimacy of violence and also of their capability to bring in change through violence, then alone they are likely to take resort to violence.

Following 'Ted Robert Gurr, it is possible to distinguish

The Politics of Change

three types of deprivation which are aspirational deprivation, decremental deprivation and progressive deprivation. Aspirational deprivation occurs when people's aspirations rise much higher than the total capacity of the system for fulfilling these aspirations. Thus in developing societies it often happens that the first taste of industrialisation and modernisation creates among the educated urban groups aspirations for better employment and higher living standards which the existing economic and political systems are far from capable of providing. Decremental deprivation is caused by a situation where value capabilities decline with no corresponding diminution in people's aspirations. Here there takes place a positive loss of value. People losing a value they once possessed naturally suffer from great frustration and, therefore, they turn to violence. People with stable incomes may well face this situation in times of inflation. Progressive deprivation takes place when people having enjoyed some gains for some time naturally cherish the hope that they will continue to do so when suddenly these incremental gains stop accruing to them. Thus when a people have enjoyed civil liberty for long and have held the belief that they will continue enjoying so sudden denial of their civil liberty may take them to the path of violence.

The phenomenon of violence may thus be accounted for mainly by the degree of discordance between social want formation and social want satisfaction. The gap between social want formation and social want satisfaction generates social frustration that gives birth to violence. In a developed society comfortably placed at a high level of economic growth and having had variety of resources, satisfying social wants is a much easier task for the economic and political system. Moreover, in a highly industrialised developed society many of the basic social wants having already been met successfully, one scarcely notices a steep rise in the curve of want formation. Further, a developed economy lavishly extends new opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment and thereby diverts into money-mak-

Political Sociology

ing energies that might otherwise have been channelled through violence. Hence a developed society is less liable to violent acts and movements. But the position is just the reverse in a developing society where the early measure of modernisation with its natural impact on urbanisation, literacy rate, type of education and the pattern of mass media attract the people to a new world with its new standards of enjoyment and new possibilities of satisfaction. All this tends to promote new levels of aspirations and wants while the system as a whole is far from ready to produce ample resources for meeting these wants. This gives rise to widespread frustration which, in turn, brings in violence. This is why violence is a more frequent phenomenon in developing societies than in the developed societies or, in other words, ⁵“it is not the absence of modernity but the efforts to achieve it which produce political disorder....It is precisely the devolution of modernisation throughout the world which increased the prevalence of violence about the world”.

Violence invariably accompanies revolution although every violent act is not necessarily a revolutionary act. ⁶“Only where change occurs in the sense of a new beginning, where violence is used to constitute an altogether different form of government, to bring about the formation of a new body politic...can we speak of revolution.” Revolution, indeed, is one of the two basic forms of political change and must be differentiated from reform which is the other important form of political change. The best way to distinguish revolution from reform is to consider them in terms of the speed, scope and direction of the political change they involve. A revolution represents a rapid and complete political change whereas reform implies gradual political change limited in scope and moderate in speed. Further, violence is also an important characteristic of revolution that differentiates it from reform. Thus, even when a political change is of a radical nature it will be treated as reform, if it is sought to be effected through peaceful means. On the other hand, a political change cannot be identified as revolution, if in course of

The Politics of Change

its implementation it is found to be marked by sporadic and accidental violence. The violence used in revolution is deliberate and planned.

In modern society reform is usually adopted by the political elite to arrest a potentially violent situation caused by the maladjustment between social change and political change. Reform, therefore, is not as easy as it apparently looks and a reformer must, indeed, have high political skill. After all, those who want reform must fight two kinds of enemies—the conservatives who want no change and the revolutionaries who would like to go in for radical change. The reformer must, further, be able to maintain sufficient fluidity and adaptability in his method and action and he must also have the capacity to manipulate the social forces in such a way so that the society suffers less from conflict and tension that are the potential sources of revolution. Again, since reform presupposes limited change proceeding at a slow speed the reformer has to be selective and discriminating in the choice of the scope of his action and he must also have adequate control over the process of change so that its speed does not, at any stage, increase disproportionately. Moreover, since reform is not a total change those who undertake reform must remain very much careful in maintaining a proper balance between social change and political change. Any overdoing with changes in the socio-economic sphere may have consequences that may take the level of political change to a point far beyond the limited scope originally intended by the reformer. Similarly, an overdone political change may bring in far-reaching changes at the socio-economic level which inevitably will alter the character of political change originally undertaken and in that case reform will no longer remain reform but, in fact, will very much border on revolution.

Reform is facilitated by better channels of communication between the government and the governed. By means of an elaborate and efficient communication system it is possible for the political elite to remain fully conversant with the demands

Political Sociology

of the environment and, therefore, it can promptly start taking reform measures before these demands get too hot and usher in a revolutionary situation. Again, since reform essentially means giving out concessions within the framework of the existing arrangement it is quite expensive as it involves a double cost for maintaining the status quo, on the one hand, and for meting out material benefits, on the other. The success of reform, therefore, to a large extent depends on the ability of a government to extract additional resources from the community. As governments of richer states naturally have a greater capacity to draw extra resources from the society reforms are found to be more successful in richer states than in poorer states.

Political change through reform is usually carried on with the conviction that reform is an effective substitute for revolution, that reform when successfully implemented will substantially reduce social tensions and thereby will arrest the possibility of revolution. But this may not always be true. In certain instances reform can very well be a catalyst of revolution instead of being a substitute for it. Indeed, some of the great revolutions of the world are found to have been preceded by phases of reform. Whenever a regime makes reforms by way of granting concessions it may so happen that these reform measures whet demands for still more changes which the existing regime is incapable of meeting and which thus ultimately ignite a revolutionary movement. The extent to which reform may be a precursor of revolution depends, however, on several factors like the nature and timing of the reform, the social composition of the groups demanding change and also the nature of aspirations of these groups.

The nature of reform is always important. Thus when reforms are attempted in the sphere of policies they are more likely to be a catalyst of revolution since such policy reforms nakedly expose the weakness of the existing regime and thereby generate a belief among those who seek change that they can push further the range of their demands in the face of the weak-

The Politics of Change

ness of the regime. Leadership reform, on the other hand, will just have the opposite result. By drawing the most important elements of the revolutionary movement within the fold of the Establishment such kind of reform is likely to kill the revolutionary potential. The timing of reforms is also an important variable. When the groups seeking change are in a phase of their movement where they have gained very little power concessions and reforms will hardly interest them as the latter are so scant in comparison to their aspirations for the total reconstruction of society. Again, when they are very near capturing total power they will naturally be least interested in reforms since the fulfilment of their aspirations is almost in sight. When, on the contrary, they are in an intermediate stage of their movement they are more likely to be interested in making an entry into the existing power structure and, therefore, may dislike overthrowing it by means of revolution. It is, indeed, at this stage that leadership reform may well prove very much effective. The social composition and aspirations of the groups demanding change are also an important determinant. Reforms directed at the urban middle class are more likely to be a catalyst of revolution while those meant for the rural peasantry may well serve as a substitute for revolution. People belonging to the urban middle class are usually found to be highly radical and revolutionary in their outlook. This is because of the fact that their discontent and frustration are mostly not an outcome of any material insufficiency; they rather result from "psychological insecurity, personal alienation and guilt, and an overriding need for a secure sense of identity. The urban middle class wants national dignity, a sense of progress, a national purpose, and the opportunity for fulfilment through participation in the overall reconstruction of society. These are utopian goals. They are demands which no government can really ever meet. Consequently these elements of the urban middle class cannot be appeased by reforms". Indeed, the more and more the government goes in for reform, the higher and higher rise their utopian

Political Sociology

aspirations, kindling further their propensity for revolutionary movements. While most of the unrest of the urban middle class is thus caused by their utopian demands which can never be met the discontent and dissatisfaction of the rural peasantry, on the contrary, is mostly engendered by material and economic wants usually related to land tenure and tenancy, to taxes and prices. Reform by way of making concessions to the peasantry with regard to these material insufficiencies may be highly successful in alleviating the peasant unrest and may even turn the peasantry from a potential source of revolution into a highly conservative social force, as has been found in post-war Japan, in Korea in the late 'forties, in Mexico after the 'thirties, in Bolivia in the early 'fifties and also in India just after her Independence.

Generally revolution means a rapid, violent and total change in the very many façades of the society and politics of a nation as it brings about a radical change in the dominant social values, in the social structure and political institutions, in the leadership pattern and also in governmental policies and functions. However, when revolution is considered in the context of political change what must be taken as its most important feature is the rapid mobilisation of new groups into politics. Politically, revolution is to be known by the rapidity with which it expands the range of political consciousness of the people. Once this range of political consciousness is fully expanded it is obvious that the erstwhile level of political participation will be sought to be drastically altered, that new groups will demand their political mobilisation to an extent which the existing political structure is not able to cope with. Thus political revolution necessarily leads to the destruction of existing political institutions and the creation of new ones and the success of a revolution will have to be measured by the authority and stability of the new political institutions it has given birth to. This, of course, does not mean that the course of revolution will always be the same.

The Politics of Change

Thus, in some cases, a drastic change in the existing pattern of political participation may occur only as a consequence of the collapse of the old regime whereas in some others an explosion in the pattern of political participation may itself be the cause of the destruction of the old regime and the creation of a new one.

The causes of revolution must be located in the wide gap between social change and political change. The more and more a society assumes complexity, the more and more it brings into existence new social groups which, naturally, for establishing their identity and for having material gains, will look for avenues of access to the political leadership and means of participation in the political system. If the existing political structure is not sufficiently flexible to accommodate the demands of these new social groups, the latter are likely to take to revolution. Thus ⁸“ascending or aspiring groups and rigid or inflexible institutions are the stuff of which revolutions are made”. Those political systems which have the capacity to respond promptly to the demands of the new social forces and give them due accommodation, naturally, can avoid revolution. Thus revolution does not take place in every type of society. In a highly traditional society with its very low level of social and economic complexity the demands of social forces are never too high to put a formidable pressure on the existing pattern of political participation and, therefore, in such a society chances of revolution are very slender. In highly modernised societies rising social and economic complexities, of course, generate demands for greater political mobilisation, but the thoroughly institutionalised and modernised political systems in such societies are quite capable of accommodating new social groups seeking participation in politics and thereby can avert revolutions. On the other hand, in developing and modernising societies which have already achieved some amount of social and economic change on modern lines but where the process of political development has lagged far behind the process of social and

Political Sociology

economic change and hence has utterly failed to accommodate new demands for political participation revolutions are more likely to take place.

It is too much to expect that one particular group, disgruntled and frustrated, will bring about a revolution. Indeed, revolution is possible in the context of a standing maladjustment between social change and political change only when several social groups, subjected to the strains caused by this maladjustment, join together to fight for their common cause. To be more specific, the ideal condition for revolution is provided by the situation where a dissatisfied urban middle class joins hands with the rural peasantry who are as well dissatisfied with the existing order and unitedly fight for securing their due participation in the political process. Although thus a combination of social groups alone is able to produce a revolution it is, however, possible for a particular specialised group to force a coup, a riot or even some dramatic changes in the political regime. The military is, indeed, one such specialised group and hence it is necessary to take into account the role of the military in the modern political process.

Although in the developed societies of the West civilian governments continue to be recognised as the major agent of political change in many of the countries of Latin America and the Middle East and also in quite a number of Afro-Asian states the military has been found to have frequently intervened in politics and played a significant role in the process of political change. To understand this active political role of the military one must first take note of the characteristic features of the military that distinguish it from other groups in the political system. The army as an organisation is marked by certain features that make it much more organised than any other civilian organisation in the society. It is characterised by a highly centralised command, a hierarchical structure and a rigid discipline permeating the entire organisation. The basic goal before the army is to fight successfully as a single unit and

The Politics of Change

in the context of this central objective the military command cannot but be highly centralised. For the same reason, again, the army is arranged in a hierarchical order. Since the command is centralised it must be able to transmit its orders from the highest to the lowest and hence every lower rank must carry out the orders of the immediately higher rank. In order that all these practices are properly maintained every member of the army is subjected to strict discipline. The soldier is treated as a depersonalised part of a big machine who cannot question the sacrosanctity of the established chain of commands and must abide by the rule of obedience.

Besides, the army possesses an elaborate and efficient system of intercommunications by means of which it is able to achieve a unity of decision and action despite the territorial dispersion of its units and also their frequent geographical separation. Again, the army is kept constantly alive to its martial purpose and always infused with a corporate spirit of unity and solidarity which is usually made possible by separating the members of the armed forces from the civilian society by means of separate barracks, distinctive uniforms and indoctrination of the recruits in the history and tradition of the army the net result of which is the development of a distinct *esprit de corps* among the members of the army. Moreover, the army enjoys a monopoly over the chief instruments of violence in a political system.

The military, in every political system, more or less possesses these common characteristics, yet the military is not politically active in every political system. This only means that the causes of military intervention do not lie in the organisational characteristics of the armed forces. Indeed, "the most important causes of military intervention in politics are not military but political and reflect not the social and organisational characteristics of the military establishment but the political and institutional structure of the society". Ability of the army is not enough to ensure its intervention in the political process. What is more important is the availability of opportunity to

Political Sociology

intervene and this opportunity is very much conditioned by certain objective situations, but more so by the whole political culture of the country concerned.

Among the objective situations that facilitate military intervention war condition is an important one. Usually war far expands the area of influence of the armed forces. The technicality involved in war may be too hard for the civilian authority to grasp and hence may make the civilian leaders greatly dependent on the military. This influence of the military is generally more manifested in the fields of foreign policy. Even when a country is engaged in a cold war it is likely to reveal greater influence of the military since the bigger size of the national defence expenditure made in the context of the cold war has its obvious impact on the formulation of national policies which, in effect, enhances the authority of the military. Domestic crises also increase military influence since in the face of a serious domestic crisis a government may often have to utilise the army as a police force and thereby may tend to depend more on the armed forces. Thirdly, the military may have added influence just because it enjoys a great popularity or prestige in the eyes of the people. This may happen for different reasons. Thus a military having had a spectacular victory in war may be highly popular among a people. Again, a pathetic mismanagement in civilian government may bring people closer to the armed forces.

¹⁶“Inefficiency, corruption, and political intrigue appear to be the very reverse of that austerity, brisk authoritarianism, political neutrality and patriotism which pristine publics, unaccustomed to military rule, tend to attribute to the military.” In other words, the more and more there is a general decline of confidence in the civilian government, the higher and higher is the popularity of the armed forces. But, as the level of this popular confidence in civilian government is very much an aspect of a country's political culture it will, of course, be proper to estimate the opportunities of military intervention against the background of the pattern of political culture. In the context of the ques-

The Politics of Change

tion of military intervention it is useful to identify, after ¹¹S. E. Finer, four types of political culture which are mature, developed, low and minimal. The following are the signs of a mature political culture. The civil institutions are highly developed. The public is proportionately large and well mobilised into powerful associations like industrial associations and firms, labour unions and political parties. The sovereign authority enjoys an indubitable legitimacy. Besides, there is a general agreement on the procedure to be used for transferring political power and hence the people tend to regard any exercise of power in breach of this established procedure as grossly illegitimate. Countries like Britain, U.S.A., the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand possess this mature political culture where the military is least likely to intervene directly in politics since the legitimation of military rule would be unobtainable in such a culture. A developed political culture has much in common with that of a mature political culture except that, unlike in the latter, in the former ¹²"the legitimacy of the procedures for transferring political power and the question of who or what should constitute the sovereign authority are both in dispute". Germany from the Empire to the accession of Hitler and Japan between the two wars provide clear examples of the developed political culture. In such a culture legitimation of military rule is not unobtainable, but, surely, while trying for securing this legitimacy, the military would have to face strong public resistance. In a low political culture civil procedures and public authorities are not well rooted, the legitimacy of the sovereign authority is in dispute and the public is relatively narrow and weakly organised. Such type of political culture is to be found in Turkey, Argentina, Brazil, Pakistan and the present-day Bangladesh. Since the public opinion in such societies is weak and self-divided military intervention is unlikely to face any strong public resistance. In a minimal political culture, on the other hand, all the conditions characteristic of the mature political culture are totally absent.

Political Sociology

Here the question about the problem of legitimacy is, in fact, irrelevant. The public is so politically inarticulate, so weakly organised and has so least concern for what is or is not legitimate that the military would not have to care about the problem of legitimacy and, therefore, can intervene at any time, virtually unopposed. Indeed, in such a culture the military may very well be the sole political force. Some of the Latin American countries provide examples of minimal political culture and the consequent political ascendancy of the military.

Military involvement in politics may assume one or other of the following forms : influence, pressures or blackmail, displacement and supplantment. The military may seek to have influence upon the civilian authorities by appealing to their reason or emotions. Here the entire effort is, of course, carried on through constitutional and legitimate channels. Usually in a mature political culture where the military has scant opportunity to have direct intervention in politics it may like to adopt the mode of influence. The pressure or blackmail takes place whenever the armed forces try to convince the civil authorities by the threat of some forms of sanction. It is possible for the military to apply this method in a developed political culture, taking advantage of doubts and confusions about the legitimacy of the sovereign authority and also about the established procedures for transferring political power. But, whatever sanctions the military brandishes in such a situation it has, of course, to do this far behind the scenes since the civil institutions there have not, in any case, ceased to command effective public support. Displacement means the removal of the existing incumbent of sovereign authority and placing in that position a new one. This may be done by violence or just by a threat of violence. Although the military here plays the role of a kingmaker the civilian regime, it must be remembered, is not, however, overthrown. In case of supplantment, on the contrary, the civilian regime is brought to an end and the military itself becomes the sovereign political authority, bringing in

The Politics of Change

thus a military rule in the society. While displacement is more likely to occur in a country with a low political culture it is far too easy for the military to force supplantment in a country marked by minimal political culture.

As we have seen, military intervention is essentially caused by the failures of the society and politics of a nation. The army tends to be politicised just because effective political institutions are absent, power is fragmented and the society as a whole is totally out of joint. Military rule may be established by taking advantage of these difficulties, but it has no built-in mechanism in itself whereby it can successfully mitigate all these difficulties. Moreover, getting involved in politics, it invites to itself the usual political hazards. Thus, after a successful intervention, the military may bring in certain quick changes which, at least in some cases, may look like quite progressive and, indeed, welfare-oriented. But, in any case, the problem of achieving a stable legitimacy always remains, no matter whether the general public are quite concerned about this legitimacy or not and this is what, in the long run, corrodes the vitality of the military as the ruling authority. This is why military rule has always been found to be a transitory feature in the life of a society. 'The man on horseback', after all, cannot for long sit comfortably on the saddle of political power.

REFERENCES

1. M. R. Davies & V. A. Lewis, *Models of Political Systems*, Vikas Publications, Delhi, 1971, p. 92.
2. J. H. Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest*, Clarion Paperback Edition, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1969, p. 4.
3. T. R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, Paperback Edition, 1972, p. 23.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-56.
5. S. P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Paperback, 1971, p. 41.
6. Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*, Penguin Books, 1973, p. 35.
7. S. P. Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 371.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 275.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 194.

Political Sociology

10. S. E. Finer, *The Man On Horseback*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1962, p. 81.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-139.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

CHAPTER 12

POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY : THE OTHER VIEW

Studying Political Sociology must be a novel and fascinating experience to any devoted student of politics. Political Sociology, after all, takes one far beyond the horizon hitherto explored by Political Science. Without giving an exclusive emphasis on the political variables as the only available means of explanation it seeks to identify the major points of intersection between the social and the political variables and, in course of doing so, it liberates politics out of the fixed boundaries of the state in as far as it views politics as scattered at large in the entire area of society. Politics thus, no longer, remains political ; it becomes very much nonpolitical and social. And, in the light of this nonpolitical notion of politics, Political Sociology breaks the erstwhile barriers between the state and society, establishes an essential identity between the social process and the political process and makes many a thing as the basic object of its enquiry which a conventional political scientist would hardly have brought within the scope of his investigation.

Thus Political Sociology does not begin with the state, nor is it ever interested in prescribing a solution to the eternal problem of arriving at an optimum relation between the sovereign and the subjects. Instead, it gives its main focus on the phenomenon of power. Further, to know about the way this power operates, Political Sociology does not take into account only the mode of functioning of the formal organisation of the state. In other words, Political Sociology never accepts power as the exclusive monopoly of the state. Instead, it observes the operation of power in the very many primary and secondary group relations in the society and between these power relations, on the one hand, and the power relation as manifest in the context of the working of state machineries, on the other,

Political Sociology

it sees no difference except that of a degree.

Power, to the political sociologist, is not only thus essentially social but also relational and measurable. To say that power is relational would, of course, amount to stressing the fact that in any power relation the power-addressee is no less important than the powerholder since without the former there is hardly any sense in the fact of the powerholder getting powerful. This, one may well argue, would have a clear effect on preventing the powerholder from an unlimited exercise of his power since the very awareness about the importance of the power-addressee, ignoring whom one can never expect to be powerful, is likely to work as a caution against whetting one's power hunger too far. Again, Political Sociology takes power as measurable and suggests possible ways of this measurement. The measurability of power may also be taken as a potent means to arrest the tendency on the part of the powerholder to take his power to an absolute level since to commit an excess with regard to a quantifiable thing may very well be dangerous for the doer of this excess as one who faces it is likely to know here the exact magnitude of this excess and this knowledge may heighten his resentment.

That Political Sociology is keen on avoiding the portrayal of an unbridled power is further manifest in its concern for the question of authority. One of the basic premises of the political sociologist is that power cannot last unless it is duly transformed into authority, that is, unless it is properly legitimised. In bringing about this legitimacy the role of the power-addressee is taken to be no small because it is out of a conscious and voluntary recognition on the part of the power-addressee that emerges the powerholder's right to compliance that equips him with the authority he looks for. Since the achievement of authority is not thus a one-way affair it is obvious that it cannot be stretched to an unlimited extent just by the sweet will of the powerholder. Moreover, Political Sociology seems to have an express preference for the rational-legal authority which is

Political Sociology : The Other View

a type of authority strictly bound by the deliberately framed and widely accepted rules. Of course, it does not deny that, on occasions, authority may be charismatic or traditional in which case the chances of authority overriding the limits of public control are much greater. But, then, the political sociologist would point out that, if authority tends to be more of the charismatic or the traditional type, the fault actually lies in the inherent weakness of the society that nourishes the growth of such kinds of authorities. The more a society is developed and modernised, the less is the possibility of the working of charismatic or traditional authority and, therefore, in a sufficiently modern society political authority is decidedly within decent limits. It is just because the political sociologist in this way dismisses the possibility of the operation of unlimited power in modern society that he can accept without concern his another important finding that political power in modern society rests at the hands of a few. Political power is unevenly distributed in a society, just as the resources in this society are unevenly distributed, giving rise to the elite-rule to which the mass of non-elite has to submit and this does not affect the peace and harmony of the political order just because there takes place constant accommodation or adjustment through the peaceful circulation of elite or again, as the pluralists tend to suggest, there is not one elite but several elites in the society who represent a horizontal power relationship in a society essentially pluralistic where uneven distribution of political power is legitimised and stabilised through consensus secured on the basis of mass approval.

It is against the background of this general framework of stable and legitimised power relations that Political Sociology deals with certain vitally relevant issues. Thus Political Sociology approaches bureaucracy not in terms of the policy implementing functions of the state but in the wider perspective of the general problem of effective functioning of authority. Hence it understands bureaucracy not as an indispensable state machi-

Political Sociology

nery but as an important social group having a great functional necessity in the context of the growing complexities of modern society. In other words, bureaucracy is viewed not in the typical political context, but in the larger societal context. The differentiated social structure—a characteristic feature of modern industrial society—presupposes extensive differentiation between major types of roles, institutions and interests that naturally demands large-scale organisations which thrive much on the basis of technical expertise and coordinative skill that are provided by bureaucracy. Thus the political sociologist does not dread the growing bureaucratisation in modern society, he rather accepts it as the natural mark of our modern social life. The possibility of bureaucratic dysfunctions, of course, is always there and the political sociologist, much alive to this problem, provides his prophylactics. But, in any case, he does not deviate from his fundamental position that power can never be absolute and unlimited and that is why when he considers bureaucracy as an important social mechanism for canalising power he tends to develop the image of bureaucracy as an objective, orderly and rational organisation.

Political Sociology, further, brings into limelight the phenomena of political culture, political socialisation and political participation. All these come up in the context of the problem of transforming power into authority, that is, the problem of legitimacy which is considered as crucial in Political Sociology. Legitimacy in the political sphere is basically taken to be a product of political consensus and it is to emphasise a spontaneous process of political consensus in the modern society that the concepts of political culture and political socialisation are given a great deal of importance. Here the argument is that in the modern political process political power is legitimised mainly in terms of a generally accepted value frame. This value frame, so is emphasised by the political sociologist, is not imposed by the political authority, but rather evolves spontaneously under the impact of multiple social and political factors and

Political Sociology : The Other View

thus there grows political culture. Once the political sociologist thus formulates the concept of political culture he is able to use it as a very handy tool helping his analysis in further directions. Thus political culture is used as a very important criterion for making a distinction between different political systems and the failure of political institutions is largely ascribed to the failure of a particular political culture. The greater is the homogeneity of the political culture the firmer is the basis of consensus contributing greatly to the stability of the political system. Further, the higher is the degree of congruence between the political structure and the political culture the stronger is the foundation of this consensus and it is also noted by the political sociologist that a participant political culture is most congruent with a democratic political structure—which virtually amounts to establishing the superiority of the democratic political system over others.

Political Sociology not only discovers spontaneity in the process of the formation of political culture but also in the process of its transmission and that is why it puts a great emphasis on the idea of political socialisation. Political socialisation mainly maintains a country's political culture by transmitting the political orientations of one generation to the next. Much of this transmission, of course, takes place by way of learned behaviour, but not consciously. A growing individual picks up his political orientations from others rather unconsciously and spontaneously in course of his normal social interactions. Hence political socialisation is not political indoctrination; it is a natural process that goes on throughout the whole span of one's life. When the different agencies of political socialisation are able to function properly and when, further, their functions mutually complement each other the political culture does not suffer from any sudden break and thus the political system operating against the background of this political culture enjoys stability.

Stability is further secured by means of political participa-

Political Sociology

tion. One of the important ways to legitimise political power is to extend the facilities of political participation. Hence in the context of the general problem of legitimacy Political Sociology takes into account the vital role of political participation in the modern political system. It begins with the premise that political participation is, indeed, an essential means for making elite rule acceptable in modern society. Yet every system does not reveal the same level of political participation. Even in political systems of the same type levels of political participation are found to have wide variation. The political sociologist, however, has a ready explanation for this discrepancy. His argument is that political participation is conditioned by a host of variables—psychological, political and social and although psychological variables may usually remain the same the political and, especially, the social variables may widely vary and it is because of these variations that the degree of political participation differs from country to country.

Besides the spontaneous process of consensus in a society there may also be some deliberate efforts at the institutional level directed to the goal of arriving at this consensus. That is why Political Sociology also casts its spotlight on the functions of some important social groups like political parties and pressure groups. Parties and pressure groups are the two most prominent agencies for settling conflicts in a society. The political party is a multi-interest group that accommodates diverse interests, works out a harmony among them and, having thus aggregated a variety of interests, forges consensus out of conflicts. The operation of political power is further sought to be regulated in terms of this consensus and this is actually possible whenever a political party has been able to capture political power and form government. While the political party thus works toward evolving a broad-based general consensus the pressure group, on the other hand, provides an organised shape to what may be called the sectarian consensus by articulating the interest or attitude of those who hold this interest or attitude in common.

Political Sociology : The Other View

By doing this the pressure group, of course, does not itself play a direct role in the overall conflict management, but surely it does certain very useful things that have a clear bearing on the process of settling conflicts. In the first place, by articulating interests it arrests the social tensions that inevitably emerge whenever interests in the society do not have regular channels for their transmission. Thus even when interests are conflicting with each other their proper articulation through pressure groups stops them coming near the point where they could easily disrupt the political process. By continuously conveying the demands to the decision-makers who are thus never left in the dark as to what these demands are the pressure groups enable the policy-makers to take due note of these demands and make the necessary adjustments and, in this way, provide order to the political process. Further, by adopting political bargaining as the principal instrument of its action, the pressure group stresses the importance of the peaceful mode of conflict management.

Yet the political sociologist does not eliminate the chances of disorder in the modern political process. He admits that there may be protests and agitations, accidental and planned violence and also organised revolutions. But with his characteristic dependence on the social variables as an important means of explanation he, however, does not treat these instances of disorder as simply political phenomena. Thus, to provide an explanation of all this, he looks at the society at large. But, then, he never goes beneath the surface of the social structure. In other words, he does not feel the necessity of radically altering the fundamental social relations since to him the whole problem is that of a discrepancy of speed between the processes of social change and political change. Thus, to a political sociologist, all kinds of disorder in the political process represent only transitory phases which can be successfully overcome just by a combination of better political skill and efficiency and greater resources that would help in establishing a parity between the social change and the political change. In other

Political Sociology

words, the message of the political sociologist is this : Modernise the society and ensure a high rate of its economic development, but, at the same time, make the political institutions sufficiently modernised so that they are made able to stand up to the demands of this social change. If thus a balance is secured between the social change and the political change through structural political changes, the political process will, without doubt, continue enjoying a comfortable order and stability.

But for one who believes in the laws of history, has a different criterion for estimating the merits of modernisation and economic development and consequently cannot take life so simple it is difficult to share this confidence. Indeed, if on the basis of this criterion, one probes into the heart of Political Sociology and brings to the fore its full implications, the final judgment may not square with the great hopes conveyed by the political sociologist and there may emerge just by the side of the much-publicised notion about Political Sociology the other view. But to know all about this other view it is, first, essential to scan the underlying assumption of Political Sociology and also the historical reasons behind the mode of its investigation.

It is, in fact, liberal democracy that provides the broad canvas on which Political Sociology paints quite a rosy picture and the central assumption that runs throughout it is that liberal democracy is essentially a valid system and that there is a natural beauty in its social environment. The liberal democratic system is valid because, in the first place, its basic institutions are firmly committed to the goal of bringing consensus out of conflicts, never thus allowing these conflicts to affect the stability of the system. Conflicts, thus, are not injurious to the democratic political process. On the contrary, they just keep it going and, therefore, are good for its health. Since these conflicts result from the uneven distribution of resources there is nothing wrong in this uneven distribution and, therefore, when political power is unevenly distributed in a society, leading to the elite rule,

Political Sociology : The Other View

there must not be any cause for anxiety. Political Sociology, in this way, seeks to justify one of the major failures of liberal democracy which consists in its inability to give up its natural tendency toward erecting a system of oligarchic rule although, as a matter of principle, it always champions the ideal of broad-based mass rule.

Secondly, liberal democracy is valid because in it power never tends to be unlimited. Thus although the state happens to wield the strongest power in any society in a liberal democratic set-up it is, by no means, an absolute state based on naked coercion. The liberal democratic state is keen on transforming its power into authority which is sought to be derived more from the rational-legal source that is respected by the people just because there is a general agreement among them with regard to the validity of this rational-legal foundation. Establishing authority, however, is not enough. What is necessary to keep it going is its continuous reinforcement. This reinforcement in a liberal democracy is secured through the spontaneous growth of an appropriate political culture and also by encouraging meaningful political participation.

Thirdly, liberal democracy is valid because it provides ample scope for the pluralist operation of political power. Thus in a liberal democratic political system groups like political parties and pressure groups freely proliferate and play an important role in influencing the operation and direction of political power. It is through these parties and pressure groups that the voice of the people is relayed to the government and thus decision-making, in the ultimate analysis, is found to be based on mass approval.

Fourthly, liberal democracy is valid because it is, after all, not a static political system in as far as it is amenable to change although the pattern of this political change does not usually pose any danger to the stability of the system just because its institutional arrangements are quite capable of bearing the brunt of this change. Thus a liberal democracy can successfully

Political Sociology

avert revolutions just by stepping up the process of political change in order to make it duly commensurate with the demands of social change and, similarly, it can keep away the military from the political process by only developing a mature political culture.

In order to emphasise these valid aspects of the liberal democratic political system Political Sociology, however, does not straightway glorify the democratic state and its machineries; it rather chooses to confine its enquiry within the social conditions of liberal democracy and somewhat idealises this social environment by unsparingly pointing out its spontaneity, orderliness and validity. That is why Political Sociology, again and again, tries to emphasise the fact that political authority in a developed society is unlikely to turn wayward much as it derives its legitimacy from the rational-legal source, that in a developed, democratised society the general values constituting the social ethos may tend to make bureaucracy generally responsive and responsible, that political culture in a developed society is more likely to be participant and homogeneous, that lower rates of political participation in a democracy, as in the U.S.A., should not appear strange since high economic prosperity in a developed society may make people just disinterested in politics, that developed societies alone ensure the free functioning of political parties and pressure groups, arresting thus the centripetal direction of political power, that revolutions are a distant possibility in developed societies and are more a mark of underdeveloped societies struggling for development.

In other words, the basic purpose of Political Sociology seems to rationalise and legitimise the social conditions of the liberal democratic political system and, remembering that it is the capitalist society alone that provides the most fertile soil for the vigorous growth of liberal democracy, one is naturally led to the conclusion that Political Sociology is, in essence, an attempt to vindicate the cause of the capitalist society. When one notes further how Political Sociology, while studying the

Political Sociology : The Other View

impact of society on politics, never intends to bring any substantial change in the society and takes the validity of this society for granted one is also inclined to believe that the political sociologist is determined to maintain the status quo of the capitalist society.

The political sociologist does this not for nothing.* Indeed, there are great historical reasons behind the emergence of Political Sociology as a formal subject. To know about this historical root one must take note of the nature and extent of the crisis of western liberal democracy in the perspective of which the character of Political Sociology would best be revealed. It was after the Second World War that Political Sociology formally came into being and it was just at this time that liberal democracy in the West stood face to face with a great crisis that seemed to threaten its very viability. To understand fully the implications of this crisis it is necessary to look back to some important phases of the western historical development that ultimately culminated in this crisis.

With a general breakdown in the feudal order western capitalism came to be rapidly consolidated by means of the Industrial Revolution that sought to demonstrate the splendour and glory of the capitalist society. It was then a very promising picture all around. Large-scale industrial ventures based on the capitalist mode of production were quickly stepping up the rate of growth and, therefore, were taken to be the surest means of making nations great, wealthy and prosperous. In this all-too-well atmosphere the liberal democratic machineries that were installed to cater to the needs of the new society had not very much to do besides facilitating this industrial expansion by way of allowing the growing capitalist class sufficient economic freedom so that they could fatten their capital, exploiting human labour, without any hindrance. The democratic state, at this stage, naturally, was rather weak and less coercive.

But very soon it was discovered that the danger for the capitalist society was lying inherent within itself, that the indus-

Political Sociology

trial working class brought about by the Industrial Revolution at the cost of whose due share and dignity the capitalist society was thriving might not accept their exploitation as a *fait accompli*, but, on the contrary, might get united and start trying to loose their chains as was evident in some of the sporadic working class outbursts throughout Europe in around the middle of the 19th century. Once this danger for the capitalist society was sensed there was immediately a profound change in the erstwhile functions of the democratic state. The democratic state, now, to put up a strong defence around the capitalist society and to keep intact the capitalist exploitation by ruthlessly oppressing the working class, intensified its coercive activities. Thus the democratic state became all too powerful, regulating social relations in its own terms and the more and more this oppressive image of the democratic state was manifest, the more and more were belied the loud claims so far made by the advocates of liberal democracy that it is essentially a people's government, representing the mass interest and honouring the equality and freedom of all. So long as no alternative model was evolved on the theoretical plane the problem for democratic theoreticians, however, was not much great. After all, they could conceal well the hollowness of the democratic order by means of highly sophisticated theoretical abstractions in the absence of a positive theoretical line in the opposite directions. Thus, despite odds, the democratic theories managed to flourish well.

But the development of Marxism changed the whole dimension of the problem. Marxism nakedly exposed the cruelties of the capitalist order, pointed out with accuracy how liberal democracy was made to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie and, what is more important, by showing how the united working class, by waging an intense class struggle, would eventually come out victorious and establish the socialist political system on the foundation of a radically changed social order, it clearly provided an alternative to the liberal democratic model. Thus

Political Sociology : The Other View

democratic theory, for the first time, faced a serious challenge on the theoretical plane. The possibility of an alternative political system was enough to break the complacency in which the democratic theoreticians had been basking for long. When this possibility was made a reality through the October Revolution of 1917 the democratic confidence suffered a further setback. Since the Russian Revolution till the outbreak of the Second World War the democratic theory, in fact, was in search for a self-defence although a thoroughly revised theoretical model that would face up squarely the Marxist challenge was yet to evolve. Thus for some time democratic theoreticians spent a substantial time and energy to develop the theory of political pluralism in order to deface the monistic image of democratic political authority and magnify its diffusive beauty. But since the pluralist theory could not properly stand the test of objective validity it had to die a natural death. Meanwhile the Second World War broke out bringing good luck to the democratic camp. So long as this war went on it was made easier for the advocates of liberal democracy to champion the democratic ideal since the war was presented as a democratic crusade against the onslaught of fascism.

After the war the crisis of liberal democracy, somewhat subdued during the war conditions, again came to the fore. Now the socialist challenge to the democratic order appeared with renewed vigour because by now not only the socialist system of the U.S.S.R. had exhibited its great strength to the whole world but also quite a number of countries in Europe had begun to opt for the socialist system. In the face of this changed global perspective the basic problem to liberal democracy was that of its survival. The democratic theoreticians urgently felt the necessity of presenting their case for democracy completely in a new style and with a new set of assumptions. Political Sociology, in fact, emerged to meet this urgent need of the hour.

In order that the coercive armour of the democratic state might not be a source of embarrassment to the democratic

Political Sociology

ideology it simply sidetracked the state by evolving the idea of nonpolitical politics. Thus the focus of enquiry shifted from the state to the society and this enquiry on the social plane revealed power to be a central issue in social relations. By viewing power as basically a social phenomenon, by detecting power relations in the very many spheres of social life, Political Sociology tried to prove that there is a sheer naturalness in the fact of the democratic state becoming powerful. By further showing that power is essentially conditioned and, therefore, limited by its social aspects, it also sought to establish that political power in a democratic society does not, by nature, tend to override the normal limits. Moreover, by stressing the relevance of authority to power and by enquiring into the ways it is achieved in a democratic society, Political Sociology also emphasised the fact that the holder of political power in a democratic society, for its own stability and survival, voluntarily accepts limits around itself. Again, Political Sociology tried to show that the society providing the perspectival framework of modern liberal democracy reveals a natural harmony and order : here people naturally develop their political culture, there goes on a spontaneous process of political socialisation, people tend to be participant in the political process, there are significant social group activities having a great bearing on the operation of political power. Such a society, so argued the political sociologist, has an inherent beauty and hence may need only structural and piecemeal changes, but certainly no radical qualitative change.

The emphasis of the political sociologist on society rather than on the state was necessitated not only by the need to save the face of liberal democracy but also by the urgent requirement, as felt by the democratic theoreticians, to offset the attraction of the Marxist method. To interpret politics in the broader perspective of the social system was, indeed, the method given to the western social sciences by Karl Marx. One of the basic premises following logically from Marx's historical materia-

Political Sociology : The Other View

lism is that society is the infrastructure that determines the quality of the political superstructure and that the core of the society consists in the pattern of its production relations. With a change in the system of production relations there emerges change in the social order and, consequently, in the political order and, relying on this premise, Marx was able to visualise radical social change leading to the establishment of the socialist system.

The political sociologists—the new defenders of liberal democracy—tried to usurp the outer form of this premise without taking its content and put it to the substantiation of their own argument. Thus they put emphasis on the social variables and tried to show that politics, even when analysed in a social context much in the Marxist vein, would establish the validity of the democratic system. But between their political sociology and the Marxist sociological approach to politics there is a gulf of difference. The Marxist sociological politics, much as it is based on the assumptions about the dialectical development of the material world and about the primacy of production relations in the society, views history as essentially the history of economic classes, their rise and fall, dominance and exploitation. Accordingly, the Marxist sociological politics does not take the validity of the capitalist society for granted; on the contrary, it reveals its inherent contradictions. Moreover, the Marxist use of sociology in politics is geared to the goal of effecting radical social and political change, taking revolution as a necessary instrument of this change. The political sociologist, on the other hand, while utilising the sociological tool in his analysis, looks only at the surface of the social structure, but never penetrates into its fundamental source. In other words, he refuses to treat the production relations as the essential key to an understanding of the character of the social system. This he does just because he is motivated by the desperate need of validating the capitalist society and its concomitant political structure. Thus even when Political Sociology considers unequal

Political Sociology

distribution of resources as the root of all conflict in the society it does not explore ways of effecting a fundamental social change so that unequal distribution of resources is permanently eradicated from the society. On the contrary, the political sociologist rather rejoices at the sight of this uneven distribution as without it he will have nothing to study since society in such a case will be devoid of all politics as he understands it. The political sociologist, thus, appears to be an advocate of the status quo. Political change, to him, is a matter of mere adjustment and not a radical reorientation. What he refuses to believe is that real political change can emanate only out of a fundamental social change and that this fundamental social change cannot be secured in his society without destroying its class pattern and production relations.

The political sociologist seems to hide these obvious failings of his by trying to give a scientific objectivity to his subject. That is why, since its inception, the discipline of Political Sociology has been sought to be based on volumes of empirical research. To any one who would try to raise any doubt about the credibility of the messages conveyed by Political Sociology the political sociologist would argue his case in terms of his empirical findings. He would say that his ideas, after all, emerge out of quantifiable data and hence, in case of any misgiving, one should better check these data. But, then, facts no longer remain facts whenever they are diluted with convenient assumptions. The facts collected by the political sociologist do not thus rescue him very much since they are deliberately distorted to defend the capitalist system which happens to be the central object of his enquiry.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER READING

(The list does not include the books already cited in the preceding chapters.)

- Alford, R. R. : *Party and Society*, Rand McNally, Chicago, 1963.
- Almond, G. and Coleman, J. S. : *The Politics of the Developing Areas*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1960.
- Apter, D. : *The Politics of Modernisation*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1965.
- Banton, M. (ed.) : *Political Systems and the Distribution of Power*, Tavistock Publications, London, 1968.
- Bendix, R. (ed.) : *State and Society : A Reader in Comparative Political Sociology*, Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1968.
- Bendix, R. and Lipset, S. M. (eds.) : *Class, Status and Power*, Free Press, Chicago, 1966.
- Bienen, H. : *Violence and Social Change*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1968.
- Bierstadt, R. : "The Problem of Authority" in M. Berger, T. Abel and C. H. Page (eds.), *Freedom and Control in Modern Society*, Van Nostrand, New York, 1954.
- Bottomore, T. B. and Rubel, M. (eds.) : *Karl Marx : Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy*, Watts, London, 1956.
- Bramson, L. : *The Political Context of Sociology*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1961.
- Brinton, C. : *Anatomy of Revolution*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1938.

Political Sociology

- Buckley, W. : *Modern Systems Analysis*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1967.
- Castles, F. G. : *Pressure Groups and Political Culture*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1967.
- Charlesworth, J. C. (ed.) : *Contemporary Political Analysis*, Free Press, New York, 1967.
- Davies, I. : *Social Mobility and Political Change*, Pal Mall, London, 1970.
- Easton, D. : *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, John Willey, London, 1965.
- Eckstein, H. : *Pressure Group Politics*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1960.
- Etzioni, A. : *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organisations*, Free Press, New York, 1961.
- Finkle, J. L. and Gable, R. W. (eds.) : *Political Development and Social Change*, Wiley, New York, 1966.
- Gouldner, A. (ed.) : *Studies in Leadership*, Harper, New York, 1954.
- Greer, S. and Orleans, P. : "Political Sociology" in R. L. Faris (ed.), *Handbook of Modern Sociology*, Rand McNally, Chicago, 1964.
- Horowitz, I. L. : *Foundations of Political Sociology*, Harper & Row, New York, 1972.
- Hyman, H. : *Political Socialisation*, Free Press, Glencoe, 1959.
- Janowitz, M. : *The Military in the Political Development of the New Nations*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1964.
- Kavanagh, D. : *Political Culture*, Macmillan, London, 1972.
- Lasswell, H., Lerner, D. and Rothwell, E. : *The Comparative Study of Elites*, Hoover Institute Studies, Stanford, 1952.

Books for Further Reading

- Lenski, G. : *Power and Privilege : A Theory of Stratification*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1966.
- Lerner, D. : *The Passing of Traditional Society*, Free Press, New York, 1958.
- Lindenfeld, E. (ed.) : *Reader in Political Sociology*, Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1968.
- Lipset, S. M. (ed.) : *Culture and Social Character*, Free Press, New York, 1961.
- Lipset, S. M. and Bendix, R. : *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*, University of California Press, Berkley, 1967.
- Matthews, D. : *The Social Background of Political Decision-Makers*, Random House, New York, 1961.
- Mckean, D. D. : *Party and Pressure Politics*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1949.
- Merriam, C. : *Political Power*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1934.
- Merton, R. K. : *Social Theory and Social Structure*, Free Press, New York, 1968.
- Miliband, R. : *The State in Capitalist Society*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1969.
- Mitchell, W. C. : *Sociological Analysis and Politics*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1967.
- Neumann, S. (ed.) : *Modern Political Parties : Approaches to Comparative Politics*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1956.
- Nieburg, H. : *Political Violence : The Behavioural Process*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1969.
- Palombara, J. La and Weiner, M. (eds.) : *Political Parties and Political Development*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1966.

Political Sociology

- Polsby, N. W., Dentler, R. and Smith, P. (eds.) : *Politics and Social Life*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1963.
- Pye, L. W. : *Aspects of Political Development*, Little, Brown, Boston, 1964.
- Rose, R. : *Governing Without Consensus*, Faber, London, 1971.
- Runciman, W. G. : *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1966.
- Sigel, R. (ed.) : *Political Socialisation*, Random House, New York, 1970.
- Smelser, N. J. : *Essays in Sociological Explanation*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1968.
- Sorel, G. : *Reflections on Violence*, Free Press, Chicago, 1950.
- Walter, E. V. : *Terror and Resistance*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1969.
- Wootton, G. : *Interest Groups*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1970.
- Young, R. (ed.) : *Approaches to the Study of Politics*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Ill, 1958.

INDEX

- Afro-Asian countries, 158, 182
 Almond, Gabriel, 15
 Almond and Powell, 157
 Almond and Verba, 89, 90, 91, 92, 97.
 American political system, 155, 164
 American President, 69
 American society, 51
 American Supreme Court, 166
 Amhara, 92
 Amicus Curiae, 166
 Anderson, D., 135
 Ann Arbour, 136.
 Argentina, 185.
 Aristotle, 13.
 Atlanta, 53, 54.
 Australia, 120, 149, 185.
 Austria, 133.
 Authority, 19, 20, 21, 58, 72, 73, 77, 83, 84, 86, 106, 108, 140, 192, 197, 202.
 —nature and definition of, 60-63, 190-91.
 —types of, 63-67.
 —in industrial society, 67-69.
 —in rural society, 69-70.
 —in India, 70-71.
 —political, 68, 70, 86, 106, 120, 191, 192, 198.
 Automobile Association of Eastern India, 157.

 Banfield, E.C., 18, 19, 20, 21.
 Bangladesh, 185.
 Belgium, 114.
 Bendix, 6, 7, 10.
 Benthamites, 154.
 Bentley, Arthur F., 14, 153.
 Berelson, 130, 136.
 Bluhm, William, 20.
 Bolivia, 180.
 Bonar Law, Andrew, 126.
 Brazil, 185.
 Britain, 14, 69, 84, 91, 93, 97, 98, 99, 100, 107, 114, 120, 126, 127, 129, 149, 153, 156, 165, 166, 185.
 Bureaucracy, 89, 92, 159, 163, 165, 191-92, 198.
 —meaning of, 72-73.
 —characteristics of, 74-75.
 —virtues of, 75-76.
 —functions of, 83-84.
 —dysfunctions of, 73, 76-78, 79, 81.
 —controls over, 78-81.
 —types of, 81-82.
 —social composition of, 84-85.
 —committed, 79.
 Bureaucratisation, 73-74, 83, 84.

 C. N. D., 156.
 Cabinet, 165.
 Calcutta Beautification Society, 156.
 Campbell, 127.
 Canada, 185.
 Capitalism, 199.
 Capitalist class, 50, 51.
 Capitalist society, 42, 50, 198, 199, 200, 203.
 Caste, 70, 91, 101.
 Catholic parties, 156.
 Catlin George, 1.
 Chicago school, 15.
 China, 149
 Christian Democratic party, 131.
 Churchill, Sir Winston, 22.
 Circulation of elite, 43, 49, 191.
 City of Manchester, 154.
 Civic culture, 91.
 Civil service, 22, 165.
 Clapham Sect, 154.
 Classless society, 42, 43.
 Coercion, 36-37, 61.
 Communications, 68, 69.
 Conakry, 107.
 Conflict, 11, 12, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 40, 42, 105, 125, 140, 194, 195, 196, 204.
 Congress, 69.
 Congressional committees, 164.
 Congress party of India, 148, 149.
 Connelly G.M., 127.
 Consensus, 11, 12, 23, 95, 98, 143, 150, 151, 192, 193, 194, 196.
 Conservative party, 126, 137.
 Culture, 103.

Political Sociology

- Dahl, Robert, 19, 32, 34, 35, 36, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57.
Davidson, P. E., 135.
Debureaucratisation, 83, 84.
Delegated legislation, 165.
Democratic political system, 11, 71, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 120, 123, 193, 203.
Democratic society, 67, 202.
Democratic state, 79, 199, 200, 201.
Democratic theory, 200, 201.
Dien, 148.
Duverger, Maurice, 145.
Dyke, Vernon Van, 18.
- Easton, David, 17.
Egypt, 99.
Eldersveld, S.J., 134.
Elite culture and mass culture, 98-99.
Elite theories, 41-54.
—of Mosca, 42, 43-45, 52.
—of Michels, 42, 43, 45-47, 52.
—of Pareto, 42, 43, 47-50, 52.
—of Burnham, 43, 50-51, 52.
—of Wright Mills, 43, 51-52.
—empirical test of, 53-58.
—pluralist criticism of, 54-58.
Ethiopia, 92, 93, 96, 99, 108.
Europe, 4, 200.
- Fascism, 201.
Fascist militia, 147.
Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act, 164.
Field, H.M., 127.
Finer, S.E., 165, 185.
Finland, 127.
Foskett, J. M., 127.
France, 84, 92, 93, 108, 114, 127, 129, 149, 156, 160.
Franco, 148.
- Gandhi, Mrs., 63.
Gaudet, 130, 136.
Germany, 185.
Ghana, 148.
Goldhamer, Herbert, 35, 36.
Government, 13, 21, 22, 140, 143, 163, 166, 179.
Gurin, 127.
Gurr, Ted Robert, 174.
- Hitler, 147, 185.
Hobbes, 3.
Hollingshead, August B., 53.
House of Commons, 22.
Hume, 3.
Hunter, Floyd, 53, 54.
- I.C.I., 154.
Ideology, 62-63, 86-87.
India, 28, 70, 84, 91, 92, 93, 94, 97, 99, 100, 101, 108, 109, 116, 124, 153, 160, 162, 168, 174, 180.
Indian caste system, 9.
Indian Constitution, 63.
Indian National Congress, 153.
Indian Parliament, 16.
Indian political system, 70, 89.
Indian politics, 9, 70.
Indian trade unions, 156, 168.
Industrialisation, 151, 172, 175.
Industrial Revolution, 4, 100, 199, 200.
Influence, 16, 17, 26-30.
Italy, 96, 108, 127, 129, 149.
- Japan, 100, 129, 180, 185.
Jouvenel, Bertrand de, 19.
Judiciary, 22, 80.
Jute Manufacturers' Association, 157.
- Key, V.O., 15, 169.
Klapper, 117.
Korea, 180.
- Labour party, 137, 153, 156.
Lane, Robert, 126.
Lasswell, Harold, 15, 16, 17.
Latin America, 182, 186.
Law, 13.
Lazarsfeld, 130, 136.
Legislature, 79, 159, 163, 164, 165.
Legitimacy, 59-60, 61, 63, 65, 68, 69, 86, 192.
Liberal Democracy, 196, 199, 200, 202, 203.
—validity of, 197-98.
—crisis of, 200-201.
Liberal democratic system, 152.
Lippmann, Walter, 14.

Index

- Lipset, 1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 129.
 Litchfield, E.H., 135.
 Lokpal, 80.
 Lok Sabha, 32.

 Machiavelli, 3.
 Malaysia, 150, 170.
 Marx, Karl, 41, 42, 43, 202, 203.
 Marxism, 200.
 Masai, 107.
 Mass media, 117, 118, 134, 176.
 Mckenzie, 1.
 Merriam, Charles E., 14.
 Merton, R.K., 76.
 Mexico, 93, 96, 99, 127, 129, 149, 180.
 Middle East, 182.
 Milbrath, Lester, 121, 122.
 Military, 51, 82, 92, 198.
 —characteristics of, 182-183.
 —causes of political involvement of, 183-184.
 —the patterns of political culture conditioning the political involvement of, 184-186.
 —forms of political involvement of, 186-187.
 Miller, J.D.B., 21.
 Miller, V. E., 127.
 Modernisation, 175, 176, 196.
 'Mr. Cube' campaign, 161.
 Mussolini, 147.
 Myerson, M., 180.
 Myths, 99.

 Naxalites, 124.
 Naxalite movement, 116.
 Nehru, 70.
 New Haven, 55, 56.
 New Zealand, 120, 185.
 Nkrumah, 148.
 No-changers, 154.
 North Korea, 149.
 Norway, 129, 149.
 Nuremberg Square, 107.

 October Revolution, 201.
 Odegard, Peter, 153.
 Ombudsman, 80.

 Pakistan, 185.
 Parliamentary democracy, 65, 98.
 Parry, Geraint, 43.

 Parsons, Talcott, 83.
 Peru, 162.
 Political apathy, 122-124.
 Political change, 111, 177, 178, 181, 182, 195, 196, 203, 204.
 —nature of, 172-173.
 Political class, 44, 45.
 Political culture, 103, 104, 111, 113, 118, 144, 148, 158, 159, 162, 184, 192, 193, 197, 198, 202.
 —meaning of, 86.
 —difference from ideology, 86-87.
 —difference from national character, 87-88.
 —content of, 88-89.
 —types of, 89-91.
 —and political subculture, 91.
 —as a subculture, 93-94.
 —foundations of, 94-98.
 —homogeneity of, 98-101.
 —British, 96, 100.
 —Japanese, 100.
 —Indian, 100-101.
 Political formula, 44, 45.
 Political man, 8.
 Political participation, 115, 143, 180, 181, 182, 192, 194, 197.
 —needs of, 120-121.
 —nature of, 121-122.
 —types of, 122.
 —psychological variables of, 125-126.
 —social variables of, 126-132.
 —political variables of, 132-134.
 Political party, 81, 88, 92, 116, 118, 121, 133, 153, 154, 155, 156, 158, 159, 160, 163, 166, 167, 169, 194, 197, 198.
 —and the political process, 140.
 —as a social group, 140-142.
 —functions of, 142-145.
 —structure of, 145-148.
 —classification of, 148-150.
 —and the socio-economic environment, 150-152.
 —Indian, 144.
 —American, 145, 150.
 —continental socialist, 146.
 —communist, 146, 150.

Political Sociology

- Political pluralism, 201.
 Political power, 39, 40, 59, 60, 120, 140, 141, 143, 148, 151, 187, 191, 192, 194, 196, 197, 198, 202.
 —distribution of, 40-58.
 Political process, 10, 12, 23, 97, 108, 143, 172, 183, 189, 195, 196, 198, 202.
 Political socialisation, 101, 144, 145, 192, 193, 198, 202.
 —meaning of, 103-104.
 —forms of, 105-108.
 —discontinuity of, 108-111.
 —agencies of, 111-119.
 Political sociology, 13, 23, 25, 26, 39, 40, 41, 59, 73, 84, 85, 87, 138, 140, 153, 172.
 —emergence of, 1-5, 199-201.
 —nature, definition and scope of, 6-12, 189-199, 201-204.
 —difference from Political Science, 5-7.
 —difference from Sociology of Politics, 7-10.
 —difference from Marxist sociological politics, 203-204.
 Political system, 17, 18, 86, 88, 89, 95, 96, 97, 98, 118, 144, 147, 151.
 Politics, 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 59, 87, 110, 112, 125, 172, 199, 203, 204.
 —traditional, 13-14.
 —behavioural, 14-16.
 —nonpolitical, 16-24, 189, 201.
 Politicisation of caste, 9.
 Pollock, J.K., 136.
 Polsby, Nelson W., 53.
 Power, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 52, 56, 57, 60, 61, 63, 77, 85, 192, 197, 201.
 —nature and definition of, 30-32, 34-39, 189-190, 201.
 —measurement of, 32-34.
 Power elite, 51, 52.
 Presidency College of Calcutta, 116.
 President's Rule, 82.
 Pressure group, 88, 194, 195, 197, 198.
 —and the political process, 152-153.
 —academic interest in, 153.
 —definition of, 154.
 —difference from political party, 154-156.
 —types of, 156-159.
 —determinants of the activity of, 159-160.
 —techniques of, 160-163.
 —points of entry for, 163-167.
 —determinants of the effectiveness of, 167-169.
 —social conditions favourable for the growth of, 169-170.
 —American, 161.
 Prime Minister of India, 63, 158.
 Pro-changers, 154.
 Protest, 173.
 Public accounts committees, 80.
 Public campaign, 161.

 R. S. P. C. A., 156.
 Reform, 176.
 —nature of, 177-178.
 —and revolution, 178-180.
 Relative deprivation, 173-175.
 Republican party of Mexico, 149.
 Resource, 25-26.
 Revolution, 45, 47, 49, 95, 195, 197, 203.
 —meaning of, 176-177.
 —nature of, 180-181.
 —causes of, 181-182.
 Rice, Stuart, 134.
 Role culture, 92.
 Rose, I.
 Routinisation of charisma, 65-66.
 Rudolph, Lloyd and Susanne, 101.
 Ruling class, 41-42, 43, 51.
 Runciman, 4.
 Rural peasantry, 179, 180, 182.

 Sanctions, 30, 34, 39, 41, 59, 60, 61.
 Sartori, Giovanni, 7, 9, 10.
 Scandinavian countries, 120, 185.
 Second World War, 2, 3, 15, 199, 201.
 Shils, Edward A., 35, 36.
 Simon, Herbert, 15.
 Singapore, 170.
 Singer, Milton, 101.
 Social change, 3, 152, 172, 177,

Index

- 181, 182, 195, 196, 203, 204.
 Socialisation, 103-104.
 —incomplete, 105.
 Social mobilisation, 67.
 Social process, 10, 11, 12, 16, 20, 23, 24, 40, 94, 189.
 Socialist political system, 200.
 Socialist system of the U.S.S.R., 201.
 Society, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 16, 21, 23, 25, 39, 41, 56, 98, 105, 110, 112, 114, 142, 143, 150, 163, 173, 177, 189, 195, 196, 199, 201, 202, 203, 204.
 South Vietnam, 148.
 Soviet Union, 149.
 Spain, 148.
 Speaker of the Indian Lok Sabha, 32.
 State, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 16, 21, 23, 39, 41, 152, 189, 197, 201.
 Stavanger, 129.
 Storm troopers, 147.
 Sweden, 129, 149, 166.
 Switzerland, 166, 185.
 Symbols, 97, 98.
 Tingsten, Herbert, 136.
 Totalitarian system, 152.
 Trade unions, 159.
 Tradition and modernity, 99-101.
 Truman, David B., 14, 15, 17, 153.
 Turkey, 185.
 U.S.A., 3, 4, 14, 80, 91, 107, 111, 114, 115, 120, 124, 127, 129, 149, 160, 163, 164, 168, 185, 198.
 United Malays National Organisation, 150.
 University of Chicago, 15.
 Urbanisation, 68, 151, 172, 176.
 Urban middle class, 179, 180, 182.
 Vietnam, 149.
 Vietnam War, 116.
 Vigilance Commissioner, 80.
 Violence, 152, 161, 162, 177, 186, 195.
 —causes of, 173-176.
 Voting behaviour studies
 —types of, 134-137.
 —criticism of, 137-138.
 Wallas, Graham, 14.
 War, 184.
 Weber, Max, 4, 14, 20, 63, 65, 66, 73, 75, 140.
 West Bengal College & University Teachers' Association, 157.
 West Germany, 84, 92, 99, 114, 129, 131, 133, 149.
 Whitehall, 165.
 Working class, 42, 200.



ALLAMA IQBAL LIBRARY



157586

K UNIVERSITY LIB.

Acc No 157586
 Date 15.12.78

